

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."—SHAKESPEARE.

ALL THE YEAR ROUND.

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GREAT EXPECTATIONS.

BY CHARLES DICKENS.

CHAPTER I.

My father's family name being Pirrip, and my christian name Philip, my infant tongue could make of both names nothing longer or more explicit than Pip. So, I called myself Pip, and came to be called Pip.

I give Pirrip as my father's family name, on the authority of his tombstone and my sister—Mrs. Joe Gargery, who married the blacksmith. As I never saw my father or my mother, and never saw any likeness of either of them (for their days were long before the days of photographs), my first fancies regarding what they were like, were unreasonably derived from their tombstones. The shape of the letters on my father's, gave me an odd idea that he was a square, stout, dark man with curly black hair. From the character and turn of the inscription, "Also Georgiana Wife of the Above," I drew a childish conclusion that my mother was freckled and sickly. To five little stone lozenges, each about a foot and a half long, which were arranged in a neat row beside their grave, and were sacred to the memory of five little brothers of mine—who gave up trying to get a living, exceedingly early in that universal struggle—I am indebted for a belief I religiously entertained that they had all been born on their backs with their hands in their trousers-pockets, and had never taken them out in this state of existence.

Ours was the marsh country, down by the river, within, as the river wound, twenty miles of the sea. My first most vivid and broad impression of the identity of things, seems to me to have been gained on a memorable raw afternoon towards evening. At such a time I found out for certain, that this bleak place overgrown with nettles was the churchyard; and that Philip Pirrip, late of this parish, and also Georgiana wife of the above, were dead and buried; and that Alexander, Bartholomew, Abraham, Tobias, and Roger, infant children of the aforesaid, were also dead and buried; and that the dark flat wilderness beyond the churchyard, intersected with dykes and mounds and gates, with scattered cattle feeding on it, was the marshes; and that the low leaden line beyond, was the river;

and that the distant savage lair from which the wind was rushing, was the sea; and that the small bundle of shivers growing afraid of it all and beginning to cry, was Pip.

"Hold your noise!" cried a terrible voice, as a man started up from among the graves at the side of the church porch. "Keep still, you little devil, or I'll cut your throat!"

A fearful man, all in coarse grey, with a great iron on his leg. A man with no hat, and with broken shoes, and with an old rag tied round his head. A man who had been soaked in water, and smothered in mud, and lamed by stones, and cut by flints, and stung by nettles, and torn by briars; who limped, and shivered, and glared and growled; and whose teeth chattered in his head as he seized me by the chin.

"O! Don't cut my throat, sir," I pleaded in terror. "Pray don't do it, sir."

"Tell us your name!" said the man. "Quick!"

"Pip, sir."

"Once more," said the man, staring at me.

"Give it mouth!"

"Pip. Pip, sir."

"Show us where you live," said the man.

"Pint out the place!"

I pointed to where our village lay, on the flat in-shore among the alder-trees and pollards, a mile or more from the church.

The man, after looking at me for a moment, turned me upside-down, and emptied my pockets. There was nothing in them but a piece of bread. When the church came to itself—for he was so sudden and strong that he made it go head over heels before me, and I saw the steeple under my legs—when the church came to itself, I say, I was seated on a high tombstone, trembling, while he ate the bread ravenously.

"You young dog," said the man, licking his lips, "what fat cheeks you ha' got."

I believe they were fat, though I was at that time undersized for my years, and not strong.

"Darn Me if I couldn't eat 'em," said the man, with a threatening shake of his head, "and if I ha'n't half a mind to 't!"

I earnestly expressed my hope that he wouldn't, and held tighter to the tombstone on which he had put me; partly, to keep myself upon it; partly, to keep myself from crying.

"Now then, lookee here!" said the man. "Where's your mother?"

"There, sir!" said I.

He started, made a short run, and stopped and looked over his shoulder.

"There, sir!" I timidly explained. "Also Georgiana. That's my mother."

"Oh!" said he, coming back. "And is that your father alonger your mother?"

"Yes, sir," said I; "him too; late of this parish."

"Ha!" he muttered then, considering. "Who d'ye live with—supposin' you're kindly let to live, which I han't made up my mind about?"

"My sister, sir—Mrs. Joe Gargery—wife of Joe Gargery, the blacksmith, sir."

"Blacksmith, eh?" said he. And looked down at his leg.

After darkly looking at his leg and at me several times, he came closer to my tombstone, took me by both arms, and tilted me back as far as he could hold me; so that his eyes looked most powerfully down into mine, and mine looked most helplessly up into his.

"Now lookee here," he said, "the question being whether you're to be let to live. You know what a file is."

"Yes, sir."

"And you know what wittles is."

"Yes, sir."

After each question he tilted me over a little more, so as to give me a greater sense of helplessness and danger.

"You get me a file." He tilted me again. "And you get me wittles." He tilted me again. "You bring 'em both to me." He tilted me again. "Or I'll have your heart and liver out." He tilted me again.

I was dreadfully frightened, and so giddy that I clung to him with both hands, and said, "If you would kindly please to let me keep upright, sir, perhaps I shouldn't be sick, and perhaps I could attend more."

He gave me a most tremendous dip and roll, so that the church jumped over its own weather-cock. Then, he held me by the arms, in an upright position on the top of the stone, and went on in these fearful terms:

"You bring me, to-morrow morning early, that file and them wittles. You bring the lot to me, at that old Battery over yonder. You do it, and you never dare to say a word or dare to make a sign concerning your having seen such a person as me, or any person sumever, and you shall be let to live. You fail, or you go from my words in any partickler, no matter how small it is, and your heart and your liver shall be tore out, roasted, and ate. Now, I ain't alone, as you may think I am. There's a young man hid with me, in comparison with which young man I am a Angel. That young man hears the words I speak. That young man has a secret way pecooliar to himself, of getting at a boy, and at his heart, and at his liver. It is in wain for a boy to attempt to hide himself from that young man. A boy may lock his door, may be warm in bed, may tuck himself up, may draw the clothes over his head, may think him-

self comfortable and safe, but that young man will softly creep and creep his way to him and tear him open. I am a keeping that young man from harming of you at the present moment, with great difficulty. I find it very hard to hold that young man off of your inside. Now, what do you say?"

I said that I would get him the file, and I would get him what broken bits of food I could, and I would come to him at the Battery, early in the morning.

"Say Lord strike you dead if you don't!" said the man.

I said so, and he took me down.

"Now," he pursued, "you remember what you've undertook, and you remember that young man, and you get home!"

"Goo-good night, sir." I faltered.

"Much of that!" said he, glancing about him over the cold wet flat. "I wish I was a frog. Or a eel!"

At the same time, he hugged his shuddering body in both his arms—clasping himself, as if to hold himself together—and limped towards the low church wall. As I saw him go, picking his way among the nettles, and among the brambles that bound the green mounds, he looked in my young eyes as if he were eluding the hands of the dead people, stretching up cautiously out of their graves, to get a twist upon his ankle and pull him in.

When he came to the low church wall, he got over it, like a man whose legs were numbed and stiff, and then turned round to look for me. When I saw him turning, I set my face towards home, and made the best use of my legs. But presently I looked over my shoulder, and saw him going on again towards the river, still hugging himself in both arms, and picking his way with his sore feet among the great stones dropped into the marshes here and there, for stepping-places when the rains were heavy, or the tide was in.

The marshes were just a long black horizontal line then, as I stopped to look after him; and the river was just another horizontal line, not nearly so broad nor yet so black; and the sky was just a row of long angry red lines and dense black lines intermixed. On the edge of the river, I could faintly make out the only two black things in all the prospect that seemed to be standing upright; one of these was the beacon by which the sailors steered—like an unhooped cask upon a pole—an ugly thing when you were near it; the other, a gibbet with some chains hanging to it which had once held a pirate. The man was limping on towards this latter, as if he were the pirate come to life, and come down, and going back to hook himself up again. It gave me a terrible turn when I thought so; and as I saw the cattle lifting their heads to gaze after him, I wondered whether they thought so too. I looked all round for the horrible young man, and could see no signs of him. But, now I was frightened again, and ran home without stopping.

CHAPTER II.

My sister, Mrs. Joe Gargery, was more than twenty years older than I, and had established a great reputation with herself and the neighbours because she had brought me up "by hand." Having at that time to find out for myself what the expression meant, and knowing her to have a hard and heavy hand, and to be much in the habit of laying it upon her husband as well as upon me, I supposed that Joe Gargery and I were both brought up by hand.

She was not good-looking woman, my sister; and I had a general impression that she must have made Joe Gargery marry her by hand. Joe was a fair man, with curls of flaxen hair on each side of his smooth face, and with eyes of such a very undecided blue that they seemed to have somehow got mixed with their own whites. He was a mild, good-natured, sweet-tempered, easy-going, foolish, dear fellow—a sort of Hercules in strength, and also in weakness.

My sister, Mrs. Joe, with black hair and eyes, had such a prevailing redness of skin that I sometimes used to wonder whether it was possible she washed herself with a nutmeg-grater instead of soap. She was tall and bony, and almost always wore a coarse apron, fastened over her figure behind with two loops, and having a square impregnable bib in front that was stuck full of pins and needles. She made it a powerful merit in herself, and a strong reproach against Joe, that she wore this apron so much. Though I really see no reason why she should have worn it at all: or why, if she did wear it at all, she should not have taken it off, every day of her life.

Joe's forge adjoined our house, which was a wooden house, as many of the dwellings in our country were—most of them, at that time. When I ran home from the churchyard, the forge was shut up, and Joe was sitting alone in the kitchen. Joe and I being fellow-sufferers, and having confidences as such, Joe imparted a confidence to me, the moment I raised the latch of the door and peeped in at him opposite to it, sitting in the chimney corner.

"Mrs. Joe has been out a dozen times, looking for you, Pip. And she's out now, making it a baker's dozen."

"Is she?"

"Yes, Pip," said Joe; "and what's worse, she's got Tickler with her."

At this dismal intelligence, I twisted the only button on my waistcoat round and round, and looked in great depression at the fire. Tickler was a wax-ended piece of cane, worn smooth by collision with my tickled frame.

"She sat down," said Joe, "and she got up, and she made a grab at Tickler, and she Rampaged out. That's what she did," said Joe, slowly clearing the fire between the lower bars with the poker, and looking at it: "she Rampaged out, Pip."

"Has she been gone long, Joe?" I always treated him as a larger species of child, and as no more than my equal.

"Well," said Joe, glancing up at the Dutch

clock, "she's been on the Ram-page, this last spell, about five minutes, Pip. She's a coming Get behind the door, old chap, and have the jack-towel betwixt you."

I took the advice. My sister, Mrs. Joe, throwing the door wide open, and finding an obstruction behind it, immediately divined the cause, and applied Tickler to its further investigation. She concluded by throwing me—I often served her as a connubial missile—at Joe, who, glad to get hold of me on any terms, passed me on into the chimney and quietly fenced me up there with his great leg.

"Where have you been, you young monkey?" said Mrs. Joe, stamping her foot. "Tell me directly what you've been doing to wear me away with fret and fright and worrit, or I'd have you out of that corner if you was fifty Pips and he was five hundred Gargerys."

"I have only been to the churchyard," said I, from my stool, crying and rubbing myself.

"Churchyard!" repeated my sister. "If it warn't for me you'd have been to the churchyard long ago, and stayed there. Who brought you up by hand?"

"You did," said I.

"And why did I do it, I should like to know?" exclaimed my sister.

I whimpered, "I don't know."

"I don't!" said my sister. "I'd never do it again! I know that. I may truly say I've never had this apron of mine off, since born you were. It's bad enough to be a blacksmith's wife (and him a Gargery), without being your mother."

My thoughts strayed from that question as I looked disconsolately at the fire. For, the fugitive out on the marshes with the ironed leg, the mysterious young man, the file, the food, and the dreadful pledge I was under to commit a larceny on those sheltering premises, rose before me in the avenging coals.

"Hah!" said Mrs. Joe, restoring Tickler to his station. "Churchyard, indeed! You may well say churchyard, you two." One of us, by-the-by, had not said it at all. "You'll drive me to the churchyard betwixt you, one of these days, and oh, a pr-r-ecious pair you'd be without me!"

As she applied herself to set the tea-things, Joe peeped down at me over his leg, as if he were mentally casting me and himself up, and calculating what kind of pair we practically should make, under the grievous circumstances foreshadowed. After that, he sat feeling his right-side flaxen curls and whisker, and following Mrs. Joe about with his blue eyes, as his manner always was at squatly times.

My sister had a trenchant way of cutting our bread-and-butter for us, that never varied. First, with her left hand she jammed the loaf hard and fast against her bib—where it sometimes got a pin into it, and sometimes a needle, which we afterwards got into our mouths. Then, she took some butter (not too much) on a knife and spread it on the loaf, in an apothecary kind of way as if she were making a plaster—using both sides of the knife with a slapping dexterity,

and trimming and moulding the butter off round the crust. Then, she gave the knife a final smart wipe on the edge of the plaster, and then sawed a very thick round off the loaf: which she finally, before separating from the loaf, hewed into two halves: of which Joe got one, and I the other.

On the present occasion, though I was hungry, I dared not eat my slice. I felt that I must have something in reserve for my dreadful acquaintance, and his ally the still more dreadful young man. I knew Mrs. Joe's house-keeping to be of the strictest kind, and that my larcenous researches might find nothing available in the safe. Therefore I resolved to put my hunk of bread-and-butter down the leg of my trousers.

The effort of resolution necessary to the achievement of this purpose, I found to be quite awful. It was as if I had to make up my mind to leap from the top of a high house, or plunge into a great depth of water. And it was made the more difficult by the unconscious Joe. In our already-mentioned freemasonry as fellow-sufferers, and in his good-natured companionship with me, it was our evening habit to compare the way we bit through our slices, by silently holding them up to each other's admiration now and then—which stimulated us to new exertions. To-night, Joe several times invited me, by the display of his fast-diminishing slice, to enter upon our usual friendly competition; but he found me, each time, with my yellow mug of tea on one knee, and my untouched bread-and-butter on the other. At last, I desperately considered that the thing I contemplated must be done, and that it had best be done in the least improbable manner consistent with the circumstances. I took advantage of a moment when Joe had just looked at me, and got my bread-and-butter down my leg.

Joe was evidently made uncomfortable by what he supposed to be my loss of appetite, and took a thoughtful bite out of his slice which he didn't seem to enjoy. He turned it about in his mouth much longer than usual, pondering over it a good deal, and after all gulped it down like a pill. He was about to take another bite, and had just got his head on one side for a good purchase on it, when his eye fell on me, and he saw that my bread-and-butter was gone.

The wonder and consternation with which Joe stopped on the threshold of his bite and stared at me, were too evident to escape my sister's observation.

"What's the matter now?" said she, smartly, as she put down her cup.

"I say, you know!" muttered Joe, shaking his head at me in very serious remonstrance. "Pip, old chap! You'll do yourself a mischief. It'll stick somewhere. You can't have chawed it, Pip."

"What's the matter now?" repeated my sister, more sharply than before.

"If you can cough any trifle on it up, Pip, I'd recommend you to do it," said Joe, all

aghast. "Manners is manners, but still your elth's your elth."

By this time, my sister was quite desperate, so she pounced on Joe, and, taking him by the two whiskers, knocked his head for a little while against the wall behind him: while I sat in the corner, looking guiltily on.

"Now, perhaps you'll mention what's the matter," said my sister, out of breath, "you staring great stuck pig."

Joe looked at her in a helpless way; then took a helpless bite, and looked at me again.

"You know, Pip," said Joe, solemnly, with his last bite in his cheek, and speaking in a confidential voice, as if we two were quite alone, "you and me is always friends, and I'd be the last to tell upon you, any time. But such a—"he moved his chair and looked about the floor between us, and then again at me—"such a most uncommon Bolt as that!"

"Been bolting his food, has he?" cried my sister.

"You know, old chap," said Joe, looking at me, and not at Mrs. Joe, with his bite still in his cheek. "I Bolted, myself, when I was your age—frequent—and as a boy I've been among a many Bolters; but I never see your Bolting equal yet, Pip, and it's a mercy you ain't Bolted dead."

My sister made a dive at me, and fished me up by the hair: saying nothing more than the awful words, "You come along and be dosed."

Some medical beast had revived Tar-water in those days as a fine medicine, and Mrs. Joe always kept a supply of it in the cupboard; having a belief in its virtues correspondent to its nastiness. At the best of times, so much of this elixir was administered to me as a choice restorative, that I was conscious of going about, smelling like a new fence. On this particular evening the urgency of my case demanded a pint of this mixture, which was poured down my throat, for my greater comfort, while Mrs. Joe held my head under her arm, as a boot would be held in a boot-jack. Joe got off with half a pint; but was made to swallow that (much to his disturbance, as he sat slowly munching and meditating before the fire), "because he had had a turn." Judging from myself, I should say he certainly had a turn afterwards, if he had had none before.

Conscience is a dreadful thing when it accuses man or boy; but when, in the case of a boy, that secret burden co-operates with another secret burden down the leg of his trousers, it is (as I can testify) a great punishment. The guilty knowledge that I was going to rob Mrs. Joe—I never thought I was going to rob Joe, for I never thought of any of the housekeeping property as his—united to the necessity of always keeping one hand on my bread and butter as I sat, or when I was ordered about the kitchen on any small errand, almost drove me out of my mind. Then, as the marsh winds made the fire glow and flare, I thought I heard the voice outside, of the man with the iron on his leg who had sworn me to secrecy, declaring that he couldn't and wouldn't starve until to-morrow,

but must be fed now. At other times, I thought, What if the young man who was with so much difficulty restrained from imbruting his hands in me, should yield to a constitutional impatience, or should mistake the time, and should think himself accredited to my heart and liver to-night, instead of to-morrow! If ever anybody's hair stood on end with terror, mine must have done so then. But, perhaps, nobody's ever did?

It was Christmas Eve, and I had to stir the pudding for next day, with the copper-stick, from seven to eight by the Dutch clock. I tried it with the load upon my leg (and that made me think afresh of the man with the load on *his* leg), and found the tendency of exercise to bring the bread-and-butter out at my ankle, quite unmanageable. Happily, I slipped away, and deposited that part of my conscience in my garret bedroom.

"Hark!" said I, when I had done my stirring, and was taking a final warm in the chimney corner before being sent up to bed; "was that great guns, Joe?"

"Ah!" said Joe. "There's another convict off."

"What does that mean Joe?" said I.

Mrs. Joe, who always took explanations upon herself, said, snappishly, "Escaped. Escaped." Administering the definition like Tar-water.

While Mrs. Joe sat with her head bending over her needlework, I put my mouth into the forms of saying to Joe, "What's a convict?" Joe put *his* mouth into the forms of returning such a highly elaborate answer, that I could make out nothing of it but the single word "Pip."

"There was a convict off last night," said Joe, aloud, "after sunset-gun. And they fired warning of him. And now, it appears they're firing warning of another."

"Who's firing?" said I.

"Drat that boy," interposed my sister, frowning at me over her work, "what a questioner he is. Ask no questions, and you'll be told no lies."

It was not very polite to herself, I thought, to imply that I should be told lies by her, even if I did ask questions. But she never was polite, unless there was company.

At this point, Joe greatly augmented my curiosity by taking the utmost pains to open his mouth very wide, and to put it into the form of a word that looked to me like "sulks." Therefore, I naturally pointed to Mrs. Joe, and put my mouth into the form of saying, "her?" But Joe wouldn't hear of that, at all, and again opened his mouth very wide, and shook the form of a most emphatic word out of it. But I could make nothing of the word.

"Mrs. Joe," said I, as a last resource, "I should like to know—if you wouldn't much mind—where the firing comes from?"

"Lord bless the boy!" exclaimed my sister, as if she didn't quite mean that, but rather the contrary. "From the Hulks."

"Oh-h!" said I, looking at Joe. "Hulks!"

Joe gave a reproachful cough, as much as to say, "Well, I told you so."

"And please what's Hulks?" said I.

"That's the way with this boy!" exclaimed my sister, pointing me out with her needle and thread, and shaking her head at me. "Answer him one question, and he'll ask you a dozen directly. Hulks are prison-ships, right 'cross th' meshes." We always used that name for marshes, in our country.

"I wonder who's put into prison-ships, and why they're put there?" said I, in a general way, and with quiet desperation.

It was too much for Mrs. Joe, who immediately rose. "I tell you what, young fellow," said she, "I didn't bring you up by hand to badger people's lives out. It would be blame to me, and not praise, if I had. People are put in the Hulks because they murder, and because they rob, and forge, and do all sorts of bad; and they always begin by asking questions. Now, you get along to bed!"

I was never allowed a candle to light me to bed, and, as I went up-stairs in the dark, with my head tingling—from Mrs. Joe's thimble, having played the tambourine upon it, to accompany her last words—I felt fearfully sensible of the great convenience that the Hulks were handy for me. I was clearly on my way there. I had begun by asking questions, and I was going to rob Mrs. Joe.

Since that time, which is far enough away now, I have often thought that few people know what secrecy there is in the young, under terror. No matter how unreasonable the terror, so that it be terror. I was in mortal terror of the young man who wanted my heart and liver; I was in mortal terror of my interlocutor with the ironed leg; I was in mortal terror of myself, from whom an awful promise had been extracted; I had no hope of deliverance through my all-powerful sister, who repulsed me at every turn; I am afraid to think of what I might have done, upon requirement, in the secrecy of my terror.

If I slept at all that night, it was only to imagine myself drifting down the river on a strong spring tide, to the Hulks; a ghostly pirate calling out to me through a speaking-trumpet, as I passed the gibbet-station, that I had better come ashore and be hanged there at once, and not put it off. I was afraid to sleep, even if I had been inclined, for I knew that at the first faint dawn of morning I must rob the pantry. There was no doing it in the night, for there was no getting a light by easy friction then; to have got one, I must have struck it out of flint and steel, and have made a noise like the very pirate himself rattling his chains.

As soon as the great black velvet pall outside my little window was shot with grey, I got up and went down stairs; every board upon the way, and every crack in every board, calling after me, "Stop thief!" and "Get up, Mrs. Joe!" In the pantry, which was far more abundantly supplied than usual, owing to the season, I was very much alarmed, by a hare hanging up by the heels, whom I rather thought

I caught, when my back was half turned, winking. I had no time for verification, no time for selection, no time for anything, for I had no time to spare. I stole some bread, some rind of cheese, about half a jar of mincemeat (which I tied up in my pocket-handkerchief with my last night's slice), some brandy from a stone bottle (which I decanted into a glass bottle I had secretly used for making that intoxicating fluid, Spanish-liquorice-water, up in my room : diluting the stone bottle from a jug in the kitchen cupboard), a meat bone with very little on it, and a beautiful round compact pork pie. I was nearly going away without the pie, but I was tempted to mount upon a shelf, to look what it was that was put away so carefully in a covered earthenware dish in a corner, and I found it was the pie, and I took it, in the hope that it was not intended for early use, and would not be missed for some time.

There was a door in the kitchen, communicating with the forge ; I unlocked and unbolted that door, and got a file from among Joe's tools. Then, I put the fastenings as I had found them, opened the door at which I had entered when I ran home last night, shut it, and ran for the misty marshes.

A ROMAN COOK'S ORACLE.

THE popular belief that we are indebted to Heaven for meats, and that a great Nameless kindly supplies persons to cook those meats, is quite astray in an Eternal City. The direct contrary rather obtains : Nameless taking on him the purveyor's office ; cooks betraying their diviner origin. Friend Merrynote, who is a settler and social backwoodsman in the Eternal City, and has a palatial log-house all to himself in the Corso, bursts upon me one morning, and sings tumultuously, " Let us dine ! " He is the most jocund of Adam's children, light and cheerful as a schoolboy, and the best company in the world (I would walk with him to the city whose walls fell down before the trumpets and not feel the road heavy) ; so, though his proposition had not an air of startling novelty, I feel there is more beneath it than meets the eye. I see that here is a rock on which I may lean in perfect security ; and simply murmur out " When ? Where ? How ? "

" To-day ! At the sign of the Little Bottles ! sumptuously !" he answers, without a syllable too much, or one superfluous word.

I could understand at the sign of the Owl, where the clergy gather ; at the sign of the Hanglurtaire, where the Saxons cluster noisily ; at the United States, which the gentlemen and ladies of that nation affect ; or at The British Islands, where nobility pillows its head ; but at the sign of the Little Bottles ! It sounds cavernous—perhaps cavernous.

The voice of my friend is as a cheerful horn. He is the soul of an expedition, and snaps out details with a raciness that positively inspires. I see my way but indistinctly, yet feel myself working up into a noble enthusiasm. " You have sojourned weeks," he chants, with alacrity,

" in this Eternal City, and yet are, so to speak, fasting. You have sat down every day to the Eternal dinners, and been filled with the Eternal meats and other preparations, and have not yet once dined. You shall dine to-day for the first time. Have faith ; put your trust in me," he adds, ingeniously adapting the well-known mot d'ordre to the situation, " and keep your palate dry ! "

The shades of night were falling fast, as in the case of the ill-fated young Alpine climber who carried a banner with a strange device, when we went forth to dine. A strong party—half a dozen in number. The night was dark, and lamp accommodation scanty. Merrynote, high priest of Apicus, strides on in front. Invisible angels—Soyer, Carême, Francatelli, and Gogue—walk beside us and guide us tenderly. We are about ascending a gastronomic monarch of mountains, with his robe of snow, &c., and our Balmât and our Tairraz went on in front, cheering us.

He sings for us the whole way—he keeps up the hearts of the lagging—he takes us over dangerous crevasses, where a single slip at either side would have precipitated us into yawning pools of mud. The useful precaution of tying the travellers together with ropes was utterly neglected ; no one had thought of bringing axes ; but there were instead, plenty of umbrellas. He takes us round by strange unfrequented by-ways, bids us look up at a caked and crusted mass of tumbling buildings, and old grey rockerries, where it is hard to discern nicely which is rock and which building, and tells us that this is the famous old Tarpeian cliff. Then we cross the poor sort of Hungerford suspension bridge, which has proved sadly unremunerative to the spirited proprietor, returning to him but a very light bag of halfpennies in the year. Time is *not* money with Roman commonality ; so why not just as well go round by the old bridge, half a mile or so below, and thus save their half-penny ? Time with us *is* money, dinner, everything ; and our guide breaks it to us gently that our host of the Little Bottles is a man of eccentric manners, who would not scruple to set the ordered banquet before guests ready to hand and of more punctual habits.

What ! this striking into a net of entangled lanes and alleys, into these foul narrow streets, twisting and doubling back, and shooting wildly, now to the right, now to the left, without a single light—this plunging, in fact, into the noisome atmosphere of the Ghetto, or Old Jewry of Rome—is this a necessary probation before the expected banquet ? " Courage !" still chants our Balmât through the darkness. He is waving his banner with the strange device, though the strange device is invisible. Just round this corner, just down this one more alley (with handkerchief pressed firmly to the nose), and the sign of the Little Bottles is waving and creaking noisily over our heads.

Now it breaks upon me. As in the City proper of the Great City, are certain dens, dark, dingy, unfragrant, but where you may *see* your chop or steak simmering and hissing afar off at a

fiery furnace, and have it presently brought back the tenderest, juiciest, most toothsome morsel such as a domestic cook, despairing of imitating, may fling down her ladle and die; such as ministers, princes, and other quality, noble lords and members, come down privily to relish, so has this Eternal City its own little dingy tabernacles, deliciously low and vulgar, exquisitely plebeian in appointments and decorations; but where ravishing stews and divine extracts shall be served to you. It is the Three Provincial Brothers, Chevet, Véry, Philippe, in coarse working clothes, bound in rough pigskin. The street and approaches are sloppy, and inches deep in mud; vile old clothes shops and rag establishments hang out their staple in offensive prominence. Beaked Hebrew faces peer out over farthing candles, and at the door of the cabaret, public, pothouse, estaminet, or auberge, taking a low rank too in the scale of such establishments. Carrying on his preparations with a loud publicity, stands Roman Soyer, with his arms bare, and sleeves tucked up, rising godlike out of a cloud of vapour. A supreme fragrance is diffused around, and we pass by him reverently with bowed heads, and without daring to whisper. These last few seconds are as a crisis of fearful moment; dishes are in their throes and hover on the verge of miscarriage; a word, a look, a breath, a wink, may undo all. Let us give him our prayers and pass him by into this inner sanctuary, where the banquet shall be served—a barn-looking chamber with bare white walls and roof of beams—everything deliciously rude, rustic, and in the rough. Wicker-work chairs of the familiar make of humble life—long deal table, four-legged, and halting slightly in one limb, of the simple workmanship so dear to kitchen economy. In remote corner, two Ostade boors, in blue frocks, are bent over their goblets with heads laid close together. The whole thing has the most refreshingly democratic, hail-fellow-well-meeting complexion that can be imagined.

Merrynote in the chair, on a burst of acclamation! The cloth, rough in grain as a Turkish towel, hard as a board, but spotless as snow, excites universal admiration; and two brass lamps of the Pompeian funeral model, being presently set down, the enthusiasm works up to furore. Ministering fauns, who someway appear to have a high agricultural tone, and whose hands the plough-tail would seem to fit appropriately, dance round, performing the offices of their calling in an eminently rustic way. And now, word being passed forward that all has gone well with the Roman Soyer—that he is out of danger, and as well as can be expected—here is now being borne in to us a rich reeking steam, not unaccompanied by hissing sounds, as though something had been lifted from the furnace, and, in fierce commotion, were being transferred bodily to a dish. The moment draws nigh: all eyes look wistfully to the door. The hour has come: and Our Guide, as chorus to the piece, thinks it time to speak.

He sings Fish and its loveliness. To-day, by sportive whim, or the light coquetry of gormandise, it shall be the sole aliment. We have sighed, not for the flesh, but for the fish-pots of Egypt; and the squamiferous tribe shall have a glorious monopoly. The speciality of Roman Soyer lies in dealing with fins: he is wonderful in gills. The Eternal fish is poor in quality, scarce in number, and dear in price; by so much the more will Roman Soyer rise to the situation gloriously, toying with his quarry, playing magic tricks with it, twisting it finally into some miracle of art. It hath been wagered, that were there such thing as a leathern fish, the leathern fish would be sent up exquisitely juicy, soft, delicately firm, and flavoured with the breath of the gods.

See, it comes—the first preparation—making triumphal entry, borne aloft by agricultural waiters. The prologue, the overture, and Merrynote begins to sing with enthusiasm the praises of soup. He delivers an explanatory lecture, and expounds rapturously the occult virtues of every dish. We must not eat blindly, after the manner of the meaner animals, but with an instructed, intellectual appreciation of the heavenly savours and juices before us. As the covers, taken off hastily, diffuse an ambrosial essence around, he thus speaks:

"The Mariners' Soup! Please to observe how it is presented in a state of abnormal separation, the heavy constituents in one tureen, the juice or soup, pure and simple, in another. The union of these elements, the soul and the body, results in the mariners' soup! See all these diverse components fused in happiest combination—see fish of every hue and creed and party, united here in a sort of divine harmony. Yes!" continues the lecturer, piling each proffered plate hurriedly, while fierce kindling eyes—with ever so little of a cannibal twinkle in them—were watching him greedily, and would not reck delay—"yes! this is the far-famed mariners' soup!"

"So called," says a voice struggling with a mouthful of the delicious miscellany, "because the hardy sons of Ocean love to prepare it in the simple retirement of their forecastle."

Happy, hardy sons of Ocean! We would all gladly be perpetual hardy sons of Ocean on such terms. And expectant platters are again put forward. Merrynote shakes a warning finger:

"Tis but the overture," he said; "there are Alps upon Alps in the way of delicacies yet in store. Exercise, then, a just reticence and a wise discretion."

The obvious prudence of this remark drew unanimous adhesion. But, alack! he had well-nigh spoken too late, for some thoughtless ones had almost dined (compressing three acts into that one) on the mariners' soup, and looked ruefully on their empty trenchers. It is delightful to hear Merrynote as an art-lecturer on the beautiful in fish and its culinary aesthetics:

"One of the most wide-spread of popular fallacies, and with which I have, I may say, unsuccessfully done battle during a lifetime,"

continues he, despondingly, "is the prevailing delusion that fish, as an aliment, disagrees with man's economy, that it is indigestible, that it is hostile to interior domestic quietude, that it is prone to make a pronunciamento and fly into open insurrection. Friends, Romans, countrymen, and lovers" (there is a peculiar appropriateness in this address on the score of locality), "I say emphatically no food is so digestible as fish. But it must be digested. Where? I will *not* pause for a reply. Where? I say. *In the pot, in the stewpan!*" (Murmur of adhesion from the hearers.) "This is a pregnant fact. What we have partaken of, what we shall yet partake of" (adhesion again in the shape of motion of the lips expressive of relish), "is warranted all digested. It has been digesting all day, and will sit heavy on no man's soul to-night."

Enters now the second gift of the gods. Wistful eyes speculate on it tenderly; for it is covered. An unaccustomed fragrance is spread around. We doubt, we hope, we fear, we *think* it to be Fry, and yet we hesitate. The cover is swept away with a flourish. "Fry!" sings our Professor of the Beautiful. "Fry!" murmur his disciples plaintively. It is a miscellany again, a mingle-mangle, a grill of white trout, but oh! white trout and mullet glorified, transfigured, resplendent! What manner of man can be Coquus inside? Let it go! Fade into the past, glorified white trout and mullet! give place to yet more celestial idealities! What shall we say to the sepio, or cuttle-fish, made into a stuffato, or stew, being left to simmer, and bubble, and grow tender as infants for hours, in its own rich juices, then seasoned with aromatic herbs and curious spices, the whole beating ox-tail and vermicelli soup—shall I say it?—to sticks? What shall we say, on the decent removal of the mortal remains of the brave sepio or cuttle-fish, to a Poem, an Epic, a Pindaric dight in the shape of a dish called "Laccia?" Yes, Laccia; a preparation cold but divine, rich in oils, yet with the train, and other unpleasing relishes of that lubricative utterly sublimated. Human speculation, as represented at the table, was utterly at fault: some protesting that it was of meat, meatish; but meat such as celestial butchers purvey to the immortals; others suggest faintly that it *may* be fish, but the fish of Dreamland, caught in the Sweet Waters with a golden hook; others hint at a new species fashioned for the occasion, a sort of hermaphrodite article, neither fish, flesh, nor fowl. Good red-herring is scornfully put aside. Merrynote speaks:

"Laccia is a species of whitebait caught in the waters of the Tiber. The curious traveller, sitting on a broken arch of Roman Bridge, must have observed the creaking aboriginal wheels turning below him. These are nets for the laccia: the take is on an average one little minnow to the hour. Eat and be thankful. Allah is great!"

But what shall I say of the cefalo, spigola, and others of the finny tribes who came disguised exquisitely; their dull sapless textures

saturated with flavours and juices not their own, who passed away and were never seen more? Suddenly there came a pause—the procession was suspended, was over. There were no more worlds to conquer, no exquisite little grilled sonnets, no finned Anacreontics, no more scaled dithyrambs. Then came in, as a last act of grace, a company of artichokes, bathing luxuriously in Lucca oil. Eyes swam tenderly as they pulled away the leaves softly, for it spoke to all hearts touchingly and with a gush of pathos. Was it not the last? Presently came the bill, scored up on the walls according to the old primeval canons, transferred thence to paper, and laid before the committee. A delightful rusticity, a delicious state of nature almost barbarian. It was not charged per capita, or by head, but by dish. So many dishes, so much. We might have come fifty strong. O Cielo, how moderate! As I live, on an allocution—allocation, I would say—of the cost, it stands us in no more than a poor three shillings per head, wine included!—only three shillings for a banquet of the immortal gods!

We went our way silent and dejected, picking our steps through the old Jewry again, for Nemesis walked beside us. Some thought sadly of the coming night, and with the stern and fixed resolve of ordering hot brandies and stimulating drinks when they reached home. To others, the image of the rising sun presented itself in all its appalling hideousness. But all such idle terrors passed away as a vapour. Truly had Merrynote foretold it: all things digestible had been digested in the pot, and by way of fire.

I think it is at Pisa that there is found a culinary "forty"—an academy of cooking savans, where meetings are held, and papers "communicated," and degrees conferred in that "faculty." This accounts for the healthy growth of true stewing science, based on sound eclectic principles and the Baconian method: perhaps, this body has its "transactions" with Signor Francatelli's interesting paper "On the Solidification of Soup," or Soyer "On the Inductive Theory as applied to the mayonnaise." This last allusion raises a host of pleasing memories—no hand can mix that seductive sauce like theirs, and in this the richer oils of Lucca place them on immeasurable vantage-ground. I have seen mayonnaise of lobster, wherein the most searching eye could not detect a particle of the "meat" of that shell-cased dainty, so artfully had the enticing vehicle disguised the deficiency. Albion may proudly take her stand on her immortal beef, and defy the waves, yet let her not too ineptuously claim the same pre-eminence for her plum-pudding, almost as famous. Reluctantly I say it, they order this matter better in Italy; and the rich ebony-looking block, bathed in a yellow cream, lighter and more delicate in flavour, transcends immeasurably the conscientious but ponderous twenty-pounder that rolls in about Christmastime. Our Italian delicacy is not arbitrarily relegated to one festive season: we are glad to

welcome him two and three times in the week. Wonderful tricks are played with Polentas. Bewildering effects result from so simple an element as—cheese! It turns up unexpectedly in soup; it mystifies—though familiar enough in such a situation—on the surface of maccaroni.

I do not think those Lilliputian birds—one of which sits on the top of a fork, and may be gauged nicely as an exact mouthful—undeserving of praise or respect. I remark the British mind regards them with disfavour, if not with suspicion. Enthusiastic sportsmen purveying for Roman markets, it is darkly whispered, do not too nicely discriminate, and bring home their bags distended with a loose miscellany of robins, sparrows, wrens, and such twittering fry. Stripped of their plumage, 'tis a nice eye that shall distinguish accurately. What boots it, so long as these doubtful birds have a kind of genuine game flavour, and crunch musically between the jaws. Away with these jealous probing natures that must know the mystery of what they eat—God help them!—and have in the *Lancet* (the journal of that name) and Doctor Hassall to gauge every preparation set before them. I tremble for the appalling discoveries. Better skim away lightly over the thin ice, and not know that it is marked dangerous, else this might have been the sword the late Damocles, Esq., had swinging over his head.

THE WOLF AT THE CHURCH DOOR.

THE Archbishop of Canterbury himself has publicly said that ten thousand of the twenty thousand clergy of England and Wales are not in the receipt of a hundred a year each. We have a bishop's word for it, that a bishop without private fortune in a bishopric that yields him only five thousand a year "must be a needy man." He knows the struggles of poor brethren in his diocese, and whatever remains from his other charities is spent in saving them from ruin. Take an obverse of that medal: an Ecclesiastical Commission redistributing surplus revenues of the Church, recently doubled the thousand a year of a dean who had been appointed to his office, because he possessed a private fortune that made the income of the deanery a matter of no consequence whatever to him. The same Commission, in its early days, spent nearly a hundred and fifty thousand pounds upon the houses of eight bishops. In every way to him who hath it gives. When it adds to the endowment of poor livings, it gives only its hundreds against equal hundreds raised in the parish of the starving clergyman. A parish, whether in town or country, may be populous and poor; if so, let its pastor be a beggar. That appears to be the motto of the Church Commissioners.

The clergymen of the English Church, from the archbishop down to the hungriest of superannuated curates, are in our day a body of Christian gentlemen as hardworking, and in the main as self-denying, as the world can show. The privations and sorrows of the most devoted

Greenland missionary are more than equalled by many a pale, fatherly man in rusty black, who works his life out as an underpaid clergyman in a rich English town, or in a pleasant village among our home corn-fields, claiming as a scholar and a gentleman the respect of all his parishioners, and hiding from all eyes the meals of tea and dry bread upon which he and his wife and children are subsisting. When the terrible truth peeps out from under any of its coverings, hands are outstretched in well-meant effort to conceal what it is thought might, were it fully known, bring scandal on the Church. The secret has been nobly respected, at cost of their lives, by a thousand sufferers. What it might be their shame to tell aloud—the shame of the Church of which they are true and loyal members—it is their honour to have said of them by others. A full knowledge of the truth would rather help to bind the striving million to the Church, than to bring disrespect upon it. Moreover, the grief must be published. A private man in difficulties has no chance of fair recovery till he has found courage to confess and face his difficulties boldly. Means are now being furnished to the public for a clear sense of what the words import, when it is said on the highest Church authority, that half the clergy of the Church of England have incomes below one hundred a year.

Four years ago there was formed, under the patronage of the late Bishop of Rochester, a "Clerical Fund and Poor Clergy Relief Society," for the purpose of furnishing private aid to poor clergymen in support of life insurance, and for the relief of what we must needs call destitution with small grants of money, and—pitiful to add—with sheets, blankets, and warm clothing. The secretary to this society, whose offices are at 345, Strand, is the Rev. W. G. Jervis. This gentleman has been unable to endure in silence the incessant revelations of distress that are addressed to him, and, of course reserving all names of places or persons, has published in a small pamphlet of what he may well call "Startling Facts," a part of what he has thus learnt. From that pamphlet, and from the society's report for the year now drawing to a close, we take information that will help to remove discussion of the question of small livings in the Church from the domain of vague generalities, and make men active in the search for remedy of what is now a most intolerable evil. When a vicar who has done his work in the church for forty years, and creditably brought up seven sons, finds all the toil of his life rewarded in this world with an income of little more than fifty pounds a year, while a clerk not in holy orders, but in government or mercantile employment, would have risen to a living of six or eight hundred by the same long course of duty done; when a clergyman keeping a wife and eight children on sixty pounds a year, has only seventeenpence in the house wherewith to meet the expenses of a ninth child at its birth; when a clergyman unmarried, helps and tends the poor in a wide rural parish, is their doctor as well as their

priest in fever time, falls sick himself, and, having paid out of his wretched pittance for performance of his duty, returns sick and thin to work, divides his few shillings so that they may yield him a mere bit of daily bread till quarter day, and then faints with hunger in his pulpit because the quarterly cheque had not arrived punctually; when these things happen, and are only types of a great class of sufferings borne in most cases silently with pious resignation, somebody *must* speak out. So Mr. Jervis felt; and, having heard what facts he has at last ventured to proclaim, and nobody has ventured to deny, our duty is to add to their publicity.

We shall suggest no remedy. We shall impute no wrong to anybody. The first step towards the removal of an evil is distinct acquaintance with it. It is true that we cannot say in the face of the Ecclesiastical Commission that there is the best possible distribution of the Church revenues; but we know that no one person is answerable for the present state of a long-standing grievance. We honestly believe, also, that many—and we know that some—of our bishops are in no mean degree active as brother-clergymen in yielding private and unostentatious help out of their better means to the poor clergy of their dioceses. That the torture of the distress suffered by the lower ten thousand of the English clergy should have been so long and so well concealed by its victims, is a matter for the admiration of all men, whatever their religious creed. What we know was not told for the public ear by those whose stories, with all due reserve, are now for a wise purpose made known to us.

Let us look at a part of the case submitted to the Clergy Relief Society by a gentleman in the twentieth year of his ministry, of whom a competent witness says: "He is a man of strong, active, and in every respect superior order of mind; indeed, there are few men of whose abilities I entertain so favourable an opinion. He is an excellent scholar. In classical literature I believe he has few superiors. As a Christian minister he is fully alive to the responsibilities of his office, and is diligent in the discharge of his duties."

This learned, active, suffering minister of the English Church says: "Now everything is gone, with the exception of our cow, a few hundred of meal, and a scanty supply of potatoes. This is our only provision: on this we support life day by day. To heighten all this suffering, my three youngest boys lie sick and weak, spent by a wasting sickness, and no relief to all this sooner than May next. . . . I have just 60/- to feed, clothe, and educate five children. Our state baffles description; I could not tell you all. Day by day I carry with me a troubled mind—ever engaged. I spend sleepless nights, and the thoughts of my family are ever before me; I am truly miserable. I can hardly endure to look at them—hungry and naked. The gloomy prospect presents itself, that in a few short weeks our stock of provisions will be exhausted, and we must either starve, or turn

abroad upon the world as paupers. No credit is to be had; and everything is gone that would afford relief. I could not see my little children flock round their mother and cry for bread, while an article remained that would supply their present want. Such is the state to which I am reduced, after twenty years of faithful service. Clothing would be most acceptable; I am almost ashamed to appear in public, and my wife has for some time been prevented going to church. At night we feel the want of blankets, and are obliged to use our clothes as covering."

Another clergyman, whose wife lay dangerously ill, secretly begged of the fund clothes for his six girls, his letter being accompanied with a testimonial from his archdeacon. This poor gentleman asked that his application should not be made known in his own part of the country. "For," said he, "I am surrounded by rich persons, who look upon poverty as a crime. They know that I am struggling, and very poor, but an appeal to public charity would seem like a deep sin in their eyes. I know that a poor clergyman in this neighbourhood, *whose child actually died from want of necessary food*, was so snubbed and cut for appealing to these rich folk, or rather because a friend appealed for him, that he was obliged to give up his incumbency and take a curacy near London."

It is best that these cases should be told in the words of the sufferers themselves. The resigned tone, the spirit often painfully subdued by suffering, the querulous note of occasional impatience, or of sickness of the body, as well as of the heart, it is better that a reader should be left to feel than that a writer should endeavour to describe.

A poor vicar says: "If I could only now get 7/- or 8/-, it would save us from a great deal of misery. I have six little children, and a sickly wife. We do not know what to do."

A well-bred English lady, in the depth of suffering, wrote by the death-bed of her first-born child the narrative that follows: "My husband has been twenty-three years in this diocese. The small property he had on entering the Church has been taken from him by treachery, years since. We have had ten children: six have been taken away by consumption. The long illness and loss of a specially beloved daughter caused my husband to have an apoplectic and paralytic seizure, which entirely prostrated his already weakened constitution. For two years he was unable to take duty of any kind. Our income is not 120/. We have lost two children within the last twelve months: one of these, our eldest son, has left a destitute widow and infant entirely dependent upon us, as the widow is ill and unable to work. We have been in the greatest danger of losing our house, and had it not been for the archbishop, the Corporation of the Sons of the Clergy, and Porteus Fund, we should have lost everything. Last spring my husband ruptured a blood-vessel, and for weeks his life was despaired of; anxiety has caused a fresh rupture, and since Christmas he

has been in a most precarious state. We are hourly anticipating the loss of our eldest daughter, and heart-broken as we are, our grief is doubly embittered by the thought that we know not where to seek the means to bury her. . . . When I read of the streams of Christian benevolence which have this last Christmas made glad so many desolate hearts and homes—when I compare their need, great as it is, with ours, the harder to bear from the gentle nurture which gives us a power of suffering which the lowly poor mercifully have not, I lift up my cry to Him who careth for us, and beseech Him to send help and hope to our weary hearts."

Here it may be said that the husband was consumptive, and should not have married. Was it because he was consumptive that he had the income of a washerwoman after three-and-twenty years of service in the Church? Much of the privation in most cases follows upon marriage. The incomes of much more than one half our clergy will not properly enable them to support families. Yet who does not know how wholesome—even necessary—is the minister's wife in a parish, how desirable it is for the success of many of his sick-bed ministrations that he should be one who is himself head of a family. In many rural parishes, and in town parishes too, the craving of a refined gentleman for equal sympathy and solace there is not a friend to satisfy. The whole spirit of the English Church and people demands and creates clergymen that shall come out of their own homes blessed by their own home affections, and taught by their own home trials, among the homes of their parishioners. It is not imprudent in an English clergyman to marry, sad as are the trials marriage may entail. Let him find, if he can, a brave good woman to work with him, and to die with him, if needs must!

Again, let it be remembered that these starved men are not men who hunger because they want wit to find work, or industry to do the work they find. Many of them are as well educated as the archbishops themselves; they have more than their share of work given them to do, and do it. It is, in fact, by these men of the lower ten thousand that the greater part of the real work of the Church is done. In the midst of their own sufferings they preach and pray, comfort the poor, visit the sick, devote their whole lives to their duty, and bear silently their burden of neglect.

They may be silent for many motives lower than the highest, yet the silence has been, and is, noble. If gentlemen, drawn from the same class of life, took clerkships, not in holy orders but in civil service, where no question of sacred things, but only one of self-interest occurred, and if they could then be left to earn less than a hundred a year after forty years of service, with a certainty of being unprovided for when they had worked out their strength, their cry would ring throughout the nation. Especially if, like the clergy, they had been required to qualify themselves for such a calling by the most expensive form of education. No fear of

further injury to their neglected interests would ever abate a breath of any one. It is, then, a generous sense of decorum, a respect in these neglected workers for the sacred nature of their work, that has to this hour made them silent except in the secret petition founded on a hope that may wring out from the heart of a gentleman a note like this:

"May I be permitted to ask whether your Society distributes blankets? If so, may I be allowed to solicit the benefit of a pair for one of my poor children? (a daughter in consumption). The feeling that my child is suffering the cold of this keen frost emboldens me to entreat a share in the bounty of your Society."

Of another clergyman, after twenty-one years' service, the income is ninety-two pounds, out of which he has twenty to pay for house-rent. He maintains a wife and nine children upon this, or rather, as he writes, "I have hitherto struggled to maintain my family with a character for integrity and uprightness, but find myself now almost overwhelmed, chiefly by exertions which I have made to keep up an insurance on my life for a few hundred pounds for the benefit of my family."

Here is a clergyman's history given in more detail:

"I am of twenty-five years' standing, and for that period have only received an average income of forty-four pounds per annum, and at present I have eighty pounds per annum, out of which I have to maintain a delicate wife and young family, and to contend against difficulties which have arisen in former years from such very scanty means. I have struggled on unaided hitherto, from a painful conviction that there were so many of my brethren worse off even than myself; but during the last two months the death of my wife's mother, which has compelled us all to go into mourning, has rendered it absolutely necessary that I should at last apply to you for aid in my deep need. I am a curate in sole charge of a large parish. I have struggled on till I can struggle no longer, without the cause of our beloved Church suffering through my deep poverty and inability to obtain even the necessities of life, as you will readily believe, when I tell you that, within the last three months, I have been wearing a coat in rags, and shoes which, from my inability to get them mended, let in water every time I put them on; and for weeks together we have not been able to get a dinner in the house from Sunday to Sunday, but have been compelled to allow ourselves but two meals a day, and those two composed of tea without sugar, and bread without butter. These are painful facts, and render some help absolutely necessary to save us from absolute starvation and complete ruin."

Gratitude for second-hand clothes comes often in letters to the Poor Clergy Relief Society. That the rosy undergraduate who pulled a cheery stroke at the oar, should, after a life's labour and devotion, come to this: "Your kind parcel was opened with a feeling of deep thankfulness and gratitude, because there

were in it so many things that will be pre-eminently serviceable, such as the shawl, which will be a great prize to my dear wife; and the coat, and vests, and stockings, and shoes, which will be a rich prize to me, as they fit me just as well as if they had been made for me, and also the shirts; and for my dear boy, things innumerable. May God reward you for your goodness."

Sometimes distress comes of an innocent imprudence like the following: "Some years since, I was presented with part of a divided living, destitute of a residence. I endeavoured to build myself a residence out of an income of only 120*l.* I could not finish without borrowing money. I procured a loan of 300*l.*, for which, as security, I had to assure my life for double that sum.

"I finished the house, and pay 6*l.* per cent. for my loan, but am sorely distressed in making out nearly 40*l.* per annum to meet expenses.

"I have seven children: the eldest I am trying to educate at — school.

"To effect this, I deny myself and family all but the necessities of life. We never can afford animal food more than once a week."

There are many more such cases of suffering in the reports on which we found this notice; there were many more such cases in the heaps of letters which supplied only to those reports a few examples. There are many, many more such cases, of which no society, no man, God alone, hears the cry of patient suffering. Yet, though silence, while the very heart is being gnawed, be great in Spartans and not rare in Englishmen both in and out of holy orders, it is hard to find, as we do, a bishop writing, in reply to questions, about a sick vicar with hundred pounds a year of living, and a wife who has brought him seventeen children, that "all the facts are true, and he and his family are certainly under great privations, but in past years they have not been as frugal to make their little go far as they might have been. I fear, too, they are rather extensive letter-writers, and have reproved them for such habit." Upon the whole, I should say the case is one in which some help may be worthily and mercifully bestowed, for who knows but they who experience them what such trials are?"

Did that dignitary with the high sense of decorum in others, and the small sense of decorum in himself, inhabit one of the eight palaces, on the replenishing of which the Ecclesiastical Commissioners had bestowed its charity of one hundred and forty thousand pounds?

THE WORLD OF LOVE.

WHERE low the sun's last beams were shed,
Watching the sinking day,
A tender sadness, earthly bred,
Fell on me as I lay.

The white, white moon went flowing fast
To steal to his embrace,
His parting smile upon her cast
Had brightened all her face.

So, constant still, I marked them move,
My soul meanwhile constraining
How he was like to mortal Love,
And she like Death pursuing.

I slept—and woke: O wondrous world!
Mine eyes were eastward turned;
The cold moon waned with wings half furled,
The skies with glory burned.

"Pale shape," I cried, "thy regal brow
Ruled this benighted strand:
But, O my soul! how fares it now
In yon blest morning land?"

I gazed, and saw: the broad sun rose
With radiance crowned and belted;
The white, white moon, like scattered snows
Into the shadows melted.

Then first I learned what name to give
That world beyond the sky:
God's heaven, where only Love can live,
And only Death can die.

A DAY'S RIDE: A LIFE'S ROMANCE.

CHAPTER XXII.

We continued our journey the next morning, but it was not without considerable difficulty that I succeeded in maintaining my former place in the cabriolet. That stupid old woman fancied that princes were born to be bored, and suggested accordingly that I should travel inside with her; leaving the macaw and the toy terriers to keep company with Miss Herbert. It was not only by insisting on an outside place as a measure of health that I at last prevailed, telling her that Dr. Corvinsart was peremptory on two points regarding me. "Let him," said he, "have abundance offresh air, and never be without some young companion."

And so we were again in our little leather tent, high up in the fresh breezy atmosphere, above dusty roads, and with a glorious view over that lovely country that forms the approach to the Black Forest. The road was hilly, and the carriage-way a heavy one, but we had six horses who trotted along briskly, shaking their merry bells, and flourishing their scarlet tassels, while the postilions cracked their whips or broke out into occasional bugle performances, principally intended to announce to the passing peasants that we were very great folk, and well able to pay for all the noise we required.

I was not ashamed to confess my enjoyment in thus whirling along at some ten miles the hour, remembering how that great sage Dr. Johnson had confessed to a like pleasure, and animated by the inspiring air and the lovely landscape, could not help asking Miss Herbert if she did not feel it "very jolly?"

She assented with a sort of constrained curtsey that by no means responded to the warmth of my own sensations, and I felt vexed and chafed accordingly.

"Perhaps you prefer travelling inside?" said I, with some pique.
"No, sir."

"Perhaps you dislike travelling altogether?"

"No, sir."

"Perhaps—" But I checked myself—and, with a somewhat stiff air, I said, "Would you like a book?"

"If it would not be rude to read, sir, while you—"

"Oh, not at all, never mind me, I have more than enough to think of. Here are some things by Dumas, and Paul Féval, and some guide-book trash." And with that I handed her several volumes, and sank back into my corner in sulky isolation.

Here was a change! Ten minutes ago, all nature smiled on me; from the lark in the high heavens to the chirping grasshopper in the tall maize-field, it was one song of joy and gladness. The very clouds as they swept past threw new and varied light over the scene, as though to show fresh effects of beauty on the landscape—the streams went by in circling eddies, like smiles upon a lovely face—and now all was sad and crape-covered! "What has wrought this dreary change," thought I; "is it possible that the cold looks of a young woman, good-looking, I grant, but no regular downright beauty after all, can have altered the aspect of the whole world to you? Are you so poor a creature in yourself, Potts, so beggared in your own resources, so barren in all the appliances of thought and reflection, that if your companion, whoever she or he may be, sulk, you must needs reflect the humour? Are you nothing but the mirror that displays what is placed before it?"

I set myself deliberately to scan the profile beside me; her black veil, drawn down on the side furthest from me, formed a sort of background, which displayed her pale features more distinctly. All about the brow and orbit was beautifully regular, but the mouth was, I fancied, severe; there was a slight retraction of the upper lip that seemed to imply over-firmness, and then the chin was deeply indented—"a sign," Lavater says, "of those who have a will of their own." "Potts," thought I, "she'd rule you—that's a nature would speedily master yours. I don't think there's any softness either, any of that yielding gentleness there, that makes the poetry of womanhood; besides, I suspect she's worldly—those sharply cut nostrils are very worldly! She is, in fact"—and here I unconsciously uttered my thoughts aloud—"she is, in fact, one to say, 'Potts, how much have you got a year? Let us have it in figures.'"

"So you are still ruminating over the life of that interesting creature," said she, laying down her book to laugh; "and, shall I confess, I lay awake half the night inventing incidents and imagining situations for him."

"For whom?" said I, innocently.

"For Potts, of course. I cannot get him out of my head such as I first fancied he might be, and I see now, by your unconscious allusion to him, that he has his place in your imagination also."

"You mistake, Miss Herbert—at least you very much misapprehend my conception of that character. The Potts family has a high historic tradition. Sir Constantine Potts was cup-bearer to Henry the Second, and I really see no reason why ridicule should attach to one who may be, most probably, his descendant."

"I'm very sorry, sir, if I should have dared to differ with you; but when I heard the name first, and in connexion with two such names as Algernon Sydney, and when I thought by what strange accident did they ever meet in the one person—"

"You are very young, Miss Herbert, and therefore not removed from the category of the teachable," said I, with a grand didactic look.

"Let me guard you, therefore, against the levity of chance inferences. What would you say if a person named Potts were to make the offer of his hand? I mean, if he were a man in all respects acceptable, a gentleman captivating in manner and address, agreeable in person, graceful and accomplished—what would you reply to his advances?"

"Really, sir, I am shocked to think of the humble opinion I may be conveying of my sense and judgment, but I'm afraid I should tell him it is impossible I could ever permit myself to be called Mrs. Potts."

"But, in Heaven's name, why?—I ask you why?"

"Oh, sir! don't be angry with me; it surely does not deserve such a penalty; at the worst it is a mere caprice on my part."

"I am not angry, young lady, I am simply provoked; I am annoyed to think that a prejudice so unworthy of you should exercise such a control over your judgment."

"I am quite ashamed, sir, to have been the occasion of so much displeasure to you. I hope and trust you will ascribe it to my utter ignorance of life and the world."

"If you are dissatisfied with yourself, Miss Herbert, I have no more to say," said I, taking up a book and pretending to read, while I felt such a disgust with myself that if I hadn't been strapped up with a leather apron up to my chin, I think I should have thrown myself headlong down and let the wheel pass over me. "What is it, Potts, that is corrupting and destroying the naturally fine and noble nature you are certainly endowed with? Is it this confounded elevation to princely rank? If you were not a royal highness would you have dared to utter such cruelties as these? Would you, in your most savage of moods, have presumed to make that pale cheek paler, and forced a tear-drop into that liquid eye? I always used to think that the greatest effort of a man was to keep himself on a level with those born above him. I now find it is far harder to stoop than to stand on tiptoe. Such a pain in the back comes of always bending, and it is so difficult to do it gracefully!"

I was positively dying to be what the French call "bon prince," and yet I didn't know how to set about it. I could not take off one of my

decorations—a cross, or a ribbon—for I had none; nor give it, because she, being a woman, couldn't wear it. I couldn't make her one of the court ladies, for there was no court; and yet it was clear something should be done, if one only knew what it was. "I suppose now," said I to myself, "a real R.H. would see his way here at once; the right thing to do, the exact expression to use would occur as naturally to his mind as all this embarrassment presents itself to mine. 'Whenever your head cannot guide you,' says a Spanish proverb, 'ask your heart;' and so I did, and my heart spoke thus: 'Tell her, Potts, who you are, and what; say to her, "Listen, young lady, to the words of truth from one who could tell you far more glibly, far more freely, and far more willingly, a whole bushel of lies. It will sit light on his heart that he deceive the old lady inside, but *you* he cannot, will not deceive. Do not deem the sacrifice a light one; it cost St. George far less to go out dragon-hunting than it costs me to slay this small monster who ever prompts me to feats of fancy.'"

"I am very sorry to be troublesome, sir, but as we change horses here, I will ask you to assist me to alight; the weather looks very threatening, and some drops of rain have already fallen."

These words roused me from my reverie to action, and I got down, not very dexterously either, for I slipped, and made the postilion laugh, and then I helped her, who accomplished the descent so neatly, so gracefully, showing the least portion of such an ankle, and accidentally giving me such a squeeze of the hand! The next moment she was lost to me, the clanking steps were drawn up, the harsh door banged to, and I was alone—all alone in the world.

Like a sulky eagle, sick of the world, I climbed up to my eyrie. I no longer wished for sunshine or scenery; nay, I was glad to see the postboys put on their overcoats and prepare for a regular down-pour. I liked to think there are some worse off than even Potts. In half an hour *they* will be drenched to the skin, and I'll not feel a drop of it!

The little glass slide at my back was now withdrawn, and Miss Herbert's pale, sweet face appeared at it. She was saying that Mrs. Keats urgently entreated I would come inside, that she was so uneasy at my being exposed to such a storm.

I refused, and was about to enter into an account of my ascent of Mont Blanc, when the slide was closed and my listener lost to me.

"Is it possible, Potts," said I, "that she has detected this turn of yours for the imaginative line, and that she will not encourage it, even tacitly? Has she said, 'There, is a young man of genius, gifted marvellously with the richest qualities, and yet such is the exuberance of his fancy that he is positively its slave. Not content to let him walk the earth like other men, she attaches wings to him, and carries him off

into the upper air. I will endeavour, however hard the task, to clip his feathers and bring him back to the common haunts of men'? Try it, fair enchantress—try it!"

The rain was now coming down in torrents, and with such swooping gusts of wind that I was forced to fasten the leather curtain in front of me, and sit in utter darkness, denied even the passing pleasure of seeing the drenched postboys bobbing up and down on the wet saddles. I grew moody and sad. Every Blue Devil of my acquaintance came to pay his visit to me, and brought a few more of his private friends. I bethought me that I was hourly travelling away further and further from my home; that all this long road must surely be retraced one day or other, though not in a carriage and post, but probably in a one-horse cart, with a mounted gendarme on either side of it, and a string to my two wrists in their bridle hands. I thought of that vulgar herd of mankind so ready to weep over a romance, and yet send the man who acts one to a penal settlement. I thought how I should be described as the artful knave, the accomplished swindler. As if I was the first man who ever took an exaggerated estimate of his own merits! Go into the House of Commons, visit the National Gallery, dine at a bar or a military mess, frequent, in one word, any of the haunts of men, and with what "*pièces pour servir à l'histoire*" of self-deception will you come back loaded!

The sliding window at my back was again drawn aside, and I heard Miss Herbert's voice:

"If I am not giving you too much trouble, sir, would you kindly see if I have not dropped a bracelet—a small jet bracelet—in the coupe?"

"I am in the dark here, but I'll do my best to find it."

"We are very nearly so too," said she; "and Mrs. Keats is fast asleep, quite unmindful of the thunder."

With some struggling I managed to get down on my knees, and was soon engaged in a very vigorous search. To aid me, I lighted a lucifer match, and by its flickering glare I saw right in front of me that beautiful pale face, enclosed as it were in a frame by the little window. She blushed at the fixedness of my gaze, for I utterly forgot myself in my admiration, and stared as though at a picture. My match went out and I lit another. Alas! there she was still, and I could not force myself to turn away, but gazed on in rapture.

"I am sorry to give you this trouble, sir," said she, in some confusion; "pray never mind it. It will doubtless be found this evening when we arrive."

Another lucifer, and now I pretended to be in most eager pursuit; but somehow my eyes would look up and rest upon her sweet countenance.

"A diamond bracelet, you said?" muttered I, not knowing what I was saying.

"No, sir, mere jet, and of no value whatever, save to myself. I am really distressed at all

the inconvenience I have occasioned you. I entreat you to think no more of it."

"My match was out, and I had not another. "Was ever a man robbed of such ecstasy for a mere pennyworth of stick and a little sulphur? O Fortune! is not this downright cruelty?"

As I mumbled my complaints, I searched away with an honest zeal, patting the cushions all over, and poking away into most inscrutable pockets and recesses, while she, in a most beseeching tone, apologised for her request, and besought me to forget it.

"Found! found!" cried I, in true delight, as I chanced upon the treasure at my feet.

"Oh, sir, you have made me so happy, and I am so much obliged, and so grateful to you!"

"Not another word, I beseech you," whispered I; "you are actually turning my head with ecstasy. Give me your hand, let me clasp it on your arm, and I am repaid."

"Will you kindly pass it to me, sir, through the window," said she, timidly.

"Ah," cried I, in anguish, "your gratitude has been very fleeting."

She muttered something I could not catch, but I heard the rustle of her sleeve against the window-frame, and dark as it was, pitch dark, I knew her hand was close to me. Opening the bracelet, I passed it round her wrist as reverently as though it were the arm of a Queen of Spain, one touch of whom is high treason. I trembled so, that it was some seconds before I could make the clasp meet. This done, I felt she was withdrawing her hand, when with something like that headlong impulse by which men set their lives on one chance, I seized the fingers in my grasp, and implanted two rapturous kisses on them. She snatched her hand hastily away, closed the window with a sharp bang, and I was alone once more in my darkness, but in such a flutter of blissful delight that even the last reproofing gesture could scarcely pain me. It mattered little to me that day that the lightning felled a great pine and threw it across the road, that the torrents were so swollen that we only could pass them with crowds of peasants around the carriage with ropes and poles to secure it, that four oxen were harnessed in front of our leaders to enable us to meet the hurricane, or that the postboys were paid treble their usual fare for all their perils to life and limb. I cared for none of these. Enough for me that, on this day, I can say with Schiller,

Ich habe gehossen das irdische Glück,
Ich habe gelebt und geliebt!

CHAPTER XXIII.

We arrived at a small inn on the borders of the Titi-see at nightfall; and though the rain continued to come down unceasingly, and large masses of cloud hung half way down the mountains, I could see that the spot was highly picturesque and romantic. Before I could descend from my lofty eminence, so strapped and but-

toned and buckled up was I, the ladies had time to get out and reach their rooms. When I asked to be shown to mine, the landlord, in a very free-and-easy tone, told me that there was nothing for me but a double-bedded room, which I must share with another traveller. I scouted this proposition at once with a degree of force and, indeed, of violence, that I fancied must prove irresistible; but the stupid German, armed with native impassiveness, simply said, "Take it or leave it, it's nothing to me," and left me to look after his business. I stormed and fumed. I asked the chambermaid if she knew who I was, and sent for the Hausknecht to tell him that all Europe should ring with this indignity. I more than hinted that the landlord had sealed his own doom, and that his miserable cabaret had seen its last days of prosperity.

I asked next, where was the Jew pedlar? I felt certain he was a fellow with pencil-cases and pipe-heads, who owned the other half of the territory. Could he not be bought up? He would surely sleep in the cow-house, if it were too wet to go up a tree!

François came to inform me that he was out fishing; that he fished all day, and only came home after dark; his man had told him so much.

"His man? Why, has he a servant?" asked I.

"He's not exactly like a servant, sir; but a sort of peasant, with a green jacket and a tall hat and leather gaiters, like a Tyrolean."

"Strolling actors, I'll be sworn," muttered I; "fellows taking a week's holiday on their way to a new engagement. How long have they been here?"

"Came on Monday last in the diligence, and are to remain till the twentieth; two florins a day they give for everything."

"What nation are they?"

"Germans, sir, regular Germans; never a pipe out of their mouths, master and man. I learned all this from his servant, for they have put up a bed for me in his room."

A sudden thought now struck me: "Why should not François give up his bed to this stranger, and occupy the one in my room?" This arrangement would suit *me* better, and it ought to be all the same to Hamlet or Goetz, or whatever he was. "Just lounge about the door, François," said I, "till he comes back; and when you see him, open the thing to him, civilly, of course; and if a crown piece or even two, will help the negotiation, slip it slyly into his hand. You understand?"

François winked like a man who had corrupted custom-house officers in his time, and even bribed bigger functionaries at a pinch.

"If he's in trade, you know, François, just hint that if he sends in his pack in the course of the evening, the ladies might possibly take a fancy to something."

Another wink.

"And throw out—vaguely, of course, very vaguely—that we are swells, but in strict incog."

A great scoundrel was François; he was Swiss, and could cheat any one, and, like a regular rogue, never happier than when you gave him a mission of deceit or duplicity. In a word, when I gave him his instructions, I regarded the negotiation as though it were completed, and now addressed myself to the task of looking after our supper, which, with national obstinacy, the landlord declared could not be ready before nine o'clock. As usual, Mrs. Keats had gone to bed immediately on arriving; but when sending me a "Good night" by her maid, she added, "that whenever supper was served, Miss Herbert would come down."

We had no sitting-room save the common room of the inn, a long, low-ceilinged, dreary chamber, with a huge green-tile stove in one corner, and down the centre a great oak table, which might have served about forty guests. At one end of this three covers were laid for us, the napkins enclosed in bone cirelets, and the salt in great leaden receptacles—like big ink bottles—a very ancient brass lamp, giving its dim radiance over all. It was wearisome to sit down on the straight-backed wooden chairs, and not less irksome to walk on the gritty, sanded floor, and so I lounged in one of the windows, and watched the rain. As I looked I saw the figure of a man with a fishing-basket and rod on his shoulder approaching the house. I guessed at once it was our stranger, and opening the window a few inches, I listened to hear the dialogue between him and François. The window was enclosed in the same porch as the door, so that I could hear a good deal of what passed. François accosted him familiarly, questioned him as to his sport, and the size of the fish he had taken. I could not hear the reply, but I remarked that the stranger emptied his basket, and was despatching the contents in different directions; some were for the curé, and some for the postmaster, some for the brigadier of the gendarmerie, and one large trout for the miller's daughter.

"A good-looking wench, I'll be sworn," said François, as he heard the message delivered.

Again the stranger said something, and I thought, from the tone, angrily, and François responded; and then I saw them walk apart for a few seconds, during which François seemed to have all the talk to himself, a good omen, as it appeared to me, of success, and a sure warranty that the treaty was signed. François however, did not come to report progress, and so I closed the window and sat down.

"So you have got company to-night, Master Ludwig," said the stranger, as he entered, followed by the host, who speedily seemed to whisper that one of the arrivals was then before him. The stranger bowed stiffly, but courteously to me, which I returned not less haughtily; and I now saw that he was a man about thirty-five, but much freckled, with a light-brown beard and moustache. On the whole, a good-looking fellow, with a very upright carriage, and something of a cavalry soldier in the swing of his gait.

"Would you like it at once, Herr Graf?" said the host, obsequiously.

"Oh, he's a count, is he?" said I, with a sneer to myself. "These countships go a short way with me."

"You had better consult your other guests; I am ready when *they* are," said the stranger.

Now, though the speech was polite and even considerate, I lost sight of the courtesy in thinking that it implied we were about to sup in common, and that the third cover was meant for him.

"I say, landlord," said I, "you don't intend to tell me that you have no private sitting-room, but that ladies of condition must needs come down and sup here with"—I was going to say, "Heaven knows who," but I halted, and said—"with the general company."

"That, or nothing!" was the sturdy response. "The guests in this house eat here, or don't eat at all; eh, Herr Graf?"

"Well, so far as my experience goes, I can corroborate you," said the stranger, laughing. "Though, you may remember, I have often counseled you to make some change."

"That you have; but I don't want to be better than my father and my grandfather; and the Arch-Duke Charles stopped here in *their* time, and never quarrelled with his treatment."

I told the landlord to apprise the young lady whenever supper was ready, and I walked to a distant part of the room and sat down.

In about two minutes after Miss Herbert appeared, and the supper was served at once. I had not met her since the incident of the bracelet, and I was shocked to see how cold she was in her manner, and how resolute in repelling the most harmless familiarity towards her.

I wanted to explain to her that it was through no fault of mine we were to have the company of that odious stranger, that it was one of the disagreeables of these wayside hostels, and to be borne with patience, and that though he was a stage player, or a sergeant of dragoons, he was reasonably well bred and quiet. I did contrive to mumble out some of this explanation, but instead of attending to it, I saw her eyes following the stranger, who had just draped a large riding-cloak over a clothes-horse behind her chair, to serve as a screen. Thanks are all very well, but I'm by no means certain that gratitude requires such a sweet glance as that, not to mention that I saw the expression in her eyes for the first time.

I thought the soup would choke me. I almost hoped it might. Othello was a mild case of jealousy compared to me, and I felt that strangling would not half glut my vengeance. And how they talked!—he complimenting her on her accent, and she telling him how her first governess was a Hanoverian from Celle, where they are all such purists. There was nothing they did not discuss in those detestable gutturals, and as glibly as if it had been a language meet for human lips. I could not eat a mouthful, but I drank and watched them. The fellow was not long in betraying himself: he was soon deep in

the drama. He knew every play of Schiller by heart, and quoted the Wallenstein, the Robbers, Don Carlos, and Maria Stuart at will; so, too, was he familiar with Goethe and Lessing. He had all the swinging intonation of the boards, and declaimed so very professionally that, as he concluded a passage, I cried out, without knowing it,

"Take that for your benefit—it's the best you have given yet."

"Oh, Lord, how they laughed! She covered up her face and smothered it; but he lay back, and holding the table with both hands, he positively shouted and screamed aloud. I would have given ten years of life for the courage to have thrown my glass of wine in his face; but it was no use. Nature had been a niggard to me in that quarter, and I had to sit and hear it—exactly so, sit and hear it—while they made twenty attempts to recover their gravity and behave like ladies and gentlemen, and when, no sooner would they look towards me, than off they were again as bad as before.

I resolved a dozen cutting sarcasms, all beginning with, "Whenever I feel assured that you have sufficiently regained the customary calm of good society," but the dessert was served ere I could complete the sentence; and now they were deep in the lyric poets, Uhland, and Korner, and Freiligrath, and the rest of them. As I listened to their enthusiasm, I wondered why people never went into raptures over a cold in the head. But it was not to end here: there was an old harpsichord in the room, and this he opened and set to work on in that fearful two-handed fashion your German alone understands. The poor old crippled instrument shook on its three legs, while the fourth fell clean off, and the loose wires jangled and jarred like knives in a tray; but he only sang the louder, and her ecstasies grew all the greater too.

Heaven reward you, dear old Mrs. Keats, when you sent word down that you couldn't sleep a wink, and begging them to "send that noisy band something and let them go away;" and then Miss Herbert wished him a sweet good night, and he accompanied her to the door, and then there was more good night, and I believe I had a short fit, but when I came to myself he was sitting smoking his cigar opposite me.

"You are no relative, no connexion of the young lady who has just left the room?" said he to me, with a grave manner, so significant of something under it, that I replied hastily, "None—none whatever."

"Was that servant who spoke to me in the porch, as I came in this evening, yours?"

"Yes." This I said more boldly, as I suspected he was coming to the question François had opened.

"He mentioned to me," said he, slowly, and puffing his cigar at easy intervals, "that you desire your servant should sleep in the same room with you. I am always happy to meet the wishes of courteous fellow-travellers, and so

I have ordered my servant to give you *his* bed; he will sleep up-stairs in what was intended for *you*. Good night." And with an insolent nod he lounged out of the room and left me.

FIVE HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

DRESS AND FOOD.

The victorious though unprofitable termination of the war with France stimulated the English nation to a pitch of exultation and joy which our impoverished condition was little able to support. The reckless extravagance into which all classes rushed, especially the humbler, resulted in general dissatisfaction. The Commons took a decided step to remedy the error. They petitioned for a statute to restrict each class to a certain limit in dress, and those who were most likely to exceed in respect of food, to an allowance: namely, the servant-class, which does not trouble itself about the price of food or clothing, for which it does not pay. A statute was accordingly passed, the provisions of which is an astonishing example of the wisdom of our ancestors.

The lowest classes of all, which included agricultural labourers and villeins, having goods under the value of forty shillings, were not to dress in any but the coarsest cloth, called blanket and russet, sold at one shilling the ell; their girdles and linen to correspond in quality. Servants, whether of lords, traders, or artificers, were confined to meat or fish once a day; the rest of their food was to consist of milk, cheese, butter, and other victuals suitable to their estate. Their dress was to be of cloth not exceeding two marks the whole piece, and destitute of gold, silver, embroidery, or silk. Their wives and daughters were to be clad in a similar manner, and were especially forbidden to wear veils or kerchiefs exceeding one shilling each. The dress of traders, artificers, and yeomen was restricted to cloth under forty shillings the whole piece, without any ornament. Their women were forbidden silken veils, and all furs save the skins of lamb, rabbit, cat, and fox. Esquires and all gentlemen below the estate of knighthood having lands to the value of one hundred pounds a year, and merchants, artificers, and traders, having goods worth five hundred pounds, were permitted to wear cloth at four marks and a half the whole piece, without any ornament. Their ladies were forbidden any kind of embroidery or lining, together with certain other curiously named decorations, the properties whereof are a mystery known only to the female mind. Esquires having lands to the value of two hundred pounds yearly, and merchants with goods worth one thousand pounds, might wear cloth sold at five marks the piece, and reasonably garnished with silk and silver. Their ladies were allowed linings of miniver fur, but not of ermine, or the rich grey fur we call lettuce, and no jewels except upon the head. Knights having lands worth two hundred marks might wear cloth of six marks the piece, but no furred, embroidered, or jewelled

garments. Their ladies were under the same restrictions as those of the preceding class. All knights with lands over the value of four hundred marks and under one thousand pounds a year, and their ladies, were restricted in nothing save the use of ermine, lettice, and jewels not being ornaments for the head. Clerks were to be dressed in the same manner as knights of one of the two classes above named, unless obliged to wear furs on ecclesiastical vestments. All sumptuary restraints were removed in the case of persons whose income exceeded one thousand pounds yearly.*

To ensure obedience to these ordinances without any special machinery for enforcing it, a provision was annexed enjoining the manufacturers to make no cloths of any other prices than those hereinbefore limited. The penalty of disobedience was the forfeiture of the garment. After the statute, however, had been in operation for less than a year, it was found to be so oppressive to the people, and so injurious to trade, that the Commons prayed for and obtained its repeal.

In an imaginary walk down Chepeside five hundred years ago, the feature that must first strike you in a general survey of costume, is the prevalence of bright colours. A great variety of costumes is worn contemporaneously in different parts of the kingdom. The cotehardie, as we call that tight garment buttoned in front down to the hips, with its tippets or long strips of cloth depending from the elbows, is worn by yonder young nobleman and by the lady with whom he is conversing. Both wear similarly shaped capuchons or hoods buttoned to the chin with liripipes or tails wrapped round their heads. Both, too, have girdles and pouches with daggers stuck through them. The women wear fox-tails sewn inside their dresses to inflate them, as the women of a later time wear crinoline. Let us continue our examination of this noble pair before they move away. The man is a knight, as you may see by the belt fastened across his hips with a circular gilt buckle, and by his spurs. His cotehardie is made of the cloth we call tars or tartan, which though here blue is as often scarlet or sometimes white. The length of the nap may strike you as unusual, but the fashion is economical; for, when partly worn the wool is resharpened, and the garment has thus several leases of life. The elaborate embroidery in silk and silver that adorns the long mantle which he wears over the cotehardie is all the rage. The mantle is fastened upon his right shoulder by two or three large buttons, and thrown over the left like a Spanish cloak: were it loose, it would cover his whole person. Note how quaintly the edges are cut into the shape of leaves. The doublet, or linen vest, worn beneath the cotchardie, is only visible at the elbow, whence it is buttoned to the wrist. There, his long gloves lap over it, made of dressed sheepskin, broidered and purfled, or

edged, at the tops with silk. His peaked shoes made of cordwain (Cordovan leather) have that intricate broidery upon them which is popularly known as "Paul's windows." Your Highlander's dress-shoes somewhat preserve this dainty fashion. His close-fitting chausses, or hose—which answer to your trousers and stockings in one—are in the newest vogue, parti-coloured black and red.

That jealous youth who eyes the pair is similarly dressed to his rival, save that in lieu of a mantle he wears a hooded cloak of Spanish silk called a paletoque, and instead of a capuchon he has a Flanders cap of beaver with an upright feather in front. He is somewhat behind the fashion in wearing his beard pointed like the old king. The late prince, our pink of chivalry, had moustaches only. Flowing curled hair, as worn by both these youths, is almost universally in vogue.

The lady's cotehardie is of a scarlet cloth, probably imported from Flanders, embroidered and very richly purfled with fur. The pockets in front are rather for show than use. The kirtle, or gown, visible beneath, appears to be made of sendale: a thin silken stuff from the East, coarser than, but resembling, the Saracenic material which we call saracen. Her cyclas, or supertunic, is of green velvet trimmed with grysoevere: an expensive grey fur. Attached to her gold-tissued girdle she carries a gypcerie, or pouch, made of fine leather broidered with silk. Her hair is of the fashionable colour, yellow—whether naturally, or dyed with saffron, as is commonly the case, we dare not pronounce. The lady on the opposite side of the street is dressed in a somewhat different fashion. Instead of the cotehardie she wears over her kirtle a sort of armless jacket, not unlike the ecclesiastical chasuble in that it has no sides. Its rich trimmings are of miniver fur. She wears a round cap of velvet instead of a capuchon, and her hair is bound up in a net of gold-wire called a crestine. When her cap is removed in-doors, she will substitute a contoise, or quintoise: a sort of scarf with two streamers.

The gaily dressed figure coming towards us is a priest. Of course at the church services he will don his normal ecclesiastical vestments, but abroad you cannot distinguish clerk from layman. If our friend, however, were to remove his cap, his tonsure would discover him. He does not wear a cotehardie—that garment, as a rule, distinguishing the higher classes—but his green tunic, purfled with fur, reaches to his knees. It is of good cloth, as are also his scarlet chausses. His beaver cap, gilt girdle, and long-toed boots, differ little, save in quality, from those of the nobles. The man with whom he has just stopped to converse is also a priest, who must have recently left church, as his dress is of the regular ecclesiastical type—scarlet gown and hood. His only girdle is of beads.

The two men who have just hurried past, are vintners. Their tunics are made of a striped

* Multiplication by fifteen will afford a rough estimate of the foregoing amounts in modern values.

cloth, imported from Flanders, and known as cloth of ray. The beaver hats which they wear over their capuchons, come also from Flanders. They have just doffed them to a rich customer arrayed in the livery of his guild, the Grocers, which consists of a coat and surcoat of crimson. On public occasions you will see him don a furred cloak or gown, with a hood, and the cognisance of his guild : the spice-bearing camel of Araby.

That stately personage, solemnly ambling on his palfrey, is a sergeant-at-law, bound perhaps for Westminster Hall, or for a consultation in the parvise, or portico, before St. Paul's. His robes consist of a scarlet gown faced with blue, a cape edged with budge or lambskin fur, a white capuchon similarly furred having two labels attached to it depending upon the breast, and a white silk coif or head-covering tied beneath the chin. The latter is the sergeant's characteristic badge, being worn over the tonsure : a relic of the time when all lawyers were clerks. As a contrasting equestrian figure, observe the farm labourer on the cart horse, who has just entered the street. His blue bliaus (answering to the blouse or smock-frock) is made of a coarse stuff called fustian, imported from St. Fustien, near Amiens. His scarlet chausses are of some common woollen material either blanket, wadmal, falding, russet, or borel, for all these are in use. The shaggy cap which forms his head-covering is called a hure. The servant woman at the door where he has stopped is in the ordinary dress of her class : a fustian gown, a white linen barm-cloth, or apron, a white voluper, or cap, and high-laced shoes. Out of doors she will probably wear a wimple : a sort of coverchief not unlike a mob-cap.

Let us adjourn to a dinner of five hundred years ago, at the Saracen's Head hostel in Fryday-street. It is now past our ordinary dinner-time, which is nine o'clock A.M. We have no such meal as breakfast. We who have recently shown ourselves masters of the French on the battle-field, are their slaves in the kitchen. Our system of cookery, in its preference of small pieces, called gobbets, to large joints of meat, and its lavish employment of spices, garlic, and other such condiments, is fundamentally one with theirs. We both make considerable use of the pestle and mortar, and Bray our meats with fruits of various kinds. Thus, forks are seldom, and spoons frequently, in request at our tables. We carry our love of colour into our food no less than dress. Saffron is our favourite ingredient for producing yellow ; sanders (sandal-wood) for red ; amydon, or wheat flour steeped in water and dried in the sun, for white ; burnt blood for black—all harmless enough. Here is the hostel, and in the hall to the left our repast is prepared.

The table is furnished after the fashion before described ; the salt-cellars occupying the centre, the trenchers made of wood, the spoons of silver, and the goblets of masere. Knives, we carry in our pouch. Here are two sorts of pottage. The one, which we call bukkennade, is a composition

of either chicken, rabbit, or veal, chopped and seethed with ground almonds, currants, sugar, ginger, cannel (cinnamon), and other spices. The other, is furmity ; made of wheat brayed with yolk of egg in broth or milk, and coloured with saffron. Here are but two kinds of fish. We dine off fish exclusively, so often—for six weeks together in Lent—that it is not much in request on other than fast days. Of these dishes, one is sliced porpoise brayed with blanched almonds. If it should appear coarse, try the other. It is what our cooks term a jelly : that is, a compound, of turbot, plaice, tench, pike, and eel, which, after being minced small and scalded, are mixed with wine, vinegar, pepper, and other spices.

For the second course here is a mess of mortrewes. The chief components are chicken, pork, bread, eggs, and spices. The fellow dish is called blankdesire from its whiteness, produced by the blanched almonds and rice flour which are added to its chief material, the brawn (that is the fleshy parts) of capons. Both these dishes require the accompaniment of wine. Yonder are flasks of Gascon and Rhenish, or, if you prefer bastard (that is, sweet) wines, there are Vernage and Claire. They are all new, for the taste in wine is just the reverse of later England's.

To diversify the attractions of science with those of art, the cook at this stage sends up a "subtlety." All banquets of any pretension include some such fanciful confectionary. This gilded group represents the favourite national emblem of St. George slaying the dragon. At the great dinners in College halls the custom will be still maintained when the year one thousand eight hundred and sixty shall be written in England. For the next course we have fillets of venison, egrets (young herons), and partridges. Before you choose the latter, it may be as well that you should know how they are dressed. Our ordinary method is to parboil, then lard, and roast them ; finally, sprinkling them thickly with ginger. To these, succeed a mess of peas minced up with onions, sugar, salt, and saffron ; and a "salat" composed of parsley, sage, garlic, onions, mint, fennel, cress, rue, and rosemary, prepared with oil, salt, and vinegar. The last course is of "doucettes." In that flat-covered dish, or coffin as we term it, is a crustard (pie) of flawn : a delicious composition of currants and apples ground up with cream, eggs, butter, whitebread, and spices. That tart is made of cheese, eggs, sugar, and spices ; and, from the first ingredient, named tart de Brie. The next dish, under the name of macrows, is the macaroni of Italy. We eat it with grated cheese. The titles of roseen and spincie are given to the two messes yonder—their main ingredients, almonds, milk, and rice, being flavoured respectively with concoctions of white roses and the hawthorn flower (spina). The last dish on the list bears the familiar name of fruture, or fritters, and is made of figs ground up with spices, rolled in a thin leaf of dough, and fried in honey.

Let us wind up the feast with a cup of "jolly Hippocras." If you would brew this incomparable beverage at home, you must mind that the wine be of the best quality, and well mixed with cardomums, ginger, cloves, marmoram, and Spanish spikenard.

INCONVENIENCES OF BEING A CORNISHMAN.

I AM a Cornishman, and I am sorry for it. I began my misfortunes early, by being placed at a school in a kind of debatable land on the borders of Devonshire. I have visions of my life at that place, visions of fierce feuds, of stubborn strifes, carried on, like the French wars, solely for the sake of an idea, that idea being a belief in the superiority of Cornish pluck and muscle. I remember that in all these wars I was generally *pushed* into glory. Why did I fight Coombes in the quarries? Had I any mortal spite against that young Devonshire giant? Nothing of the kind; I was simply brought up, nolens volens, as a kind of reserve. There had been, I believe, a row at football, and I fear it had been going rather against the "one and all," when our respective friends very kindly decided that Coombes and I, who had not been present, should finish the matter by ourselves. We had *not* been present, we had *not* commenced the quarrel, therefore we should finish it; and finish it we did, after a fight which deserved to be immortalised in an epic poem. That was Jorkind's opinion of that great encounter. Jorkind, who was of no county in particular, and therefore had an easy time of it, passed amongst us as a first-rate classic poet, and as he always got the prize for Greek and Latin verse, I dare say he was a competent judge; but I should like to see the poem, epic or otherwise, which could do justice to my feelings before I got my second wind, or could describe, properly, my sensations during the last ten minutes of that weary struggle. I don't mind confessing to Coombes now, that two minutes' more fight would have made an end of me, and that when he declined to come on again at, what would certainly have been with me, the last "round," I felt bound to him by ties of eternal gratitude.

But fighting was not the only misery which this spirit of Cornish clanship brought upon me. Why did I receive that awful thrashing from old Fortywhacks? Did I really care one rush for the confounded little imp Polglaze, who brought that retribution upon me? Polglaze was in durance vile, and I am certain now that he well deserved it. He had headed a revolutionary deputation on the subject of the mild beer, and had been first well dogged, and then locked up for his pains. But this result did not satisfy the "one and all." Whatever Polglaze may have been, he was at any rate Cornish, and was therefore to be rescued from imprisonment at all cost. A "forlorn hope" was raised, and lots were drawn as to who

should have the honour of leading it, and of course that honour fell upon me. There is an old Cornish song which we often sang in those days, and it was to the tune of it that we made our assault upon the place of Polglaze's captivity. I have the scene before me now, as we marched up the staircase bidding defiance to the powers that be: "And shall Trelawny die? forty thousand Cornishmen shall know the reason why." "Trelawny" was Polglaze. The great thing was to rescue him if possible before Fortywhacks appeared. What a tough door that was to get open! I don't believe we should ever have opened it at all, if it had not been for Handy Bob, a boy of a mechanical turn of mind, and who acted as "sapper and miner" on the occasion. Under his directions, the thing was done, and we burst, one and all, into Polglaze's prison-house. At this point, I remember, our excitement seemed to cool down a little, and a kind of feeling came over us that we had *got* Polglaze, but didn't know what to do with him. It was one of those trying moments when a leader of some genius is required, and we found such a person in Handy Bob, who, encouraged by his late success, now tacitly took the command, and hoisting Polglaze upon my shoulder, re-formed us in procession, and marched us down stairs. I wished Polglaze to the four winds. The young wretch, in his excitement, was pulling out my hair by handfuls, and I was thinking seriously about dropping him over the banisters, when I was suddenly staggered by the appearance of Fortywhacks.

"Pendraggles," said he, "I wish you joy of your prize," and he smiled one of those smiles of his which betokened bitter things.

And bitter things followed. When Jorkind came to me afterwards, and congratulated me on what he was pleased to call my Spartan endurance, comparing me to Mutius Scævola, and declaring that it required a modern Livy to tell forth my fame, I have a distinct remembrance of telling him to go and be hanged; also, of having very severely punched young Polglaze's head on the first opportunity.

Would that my miseries as a Cornishman, and because I am a Cornishman, had left me when I left school! No such good fortune; I may say that I am at *all* times being offered up on the altar of my country. My trials, however, have now taken a new turn, for whereas they may be said to have brought me formerly into collisions with my enemies, they may now with equal truth be described as proceeding entirely from my friends. I am persuaded that if I had not been a Cornishman, I should have expanded into a hearty good fellow, and that a certain genial humour, which I am conscious of possessing, au fond, would have made me a most desirable companion for all pleasant company. If, for example, I had been simply by birth an Aztec or an Earthman, or if I had been rescued when young from the worshippers of Mumbo Jumbo in the Lunar Mountains, I am convinced that I should have got over the disadvantages of my birthplace, and should have succeeded in getting myself re-

ceived on my own proper merits; but, as a Cornishman, I have had no such a chance. What a fool I was when I went up to Cambridge, to admit that I came from any greater distance than Highgate or Hampstead!

"Pendraggles," says Littermere to me (Littermere, afterwards called Long Litter, on account of his legs, was my very first college acquaintance; we had been introduced to each other in caps and gowns of startling blueness and freshness, by old Sniggles, the tutor, on the very first day of our first freshmen's term); "Pendraggles," says Littermere to me, about a month after we had been up, "confess you are a Cornishman, and that you are descended from that very same Pendraggles, of ancient memory, who got so much the better of the Phoenicians in their little dealings with tin."

"He's a horrible wrecker, that's what he is!" shouts out that long-winded bore Swilsbury; "and he may be seen any day below the locks, waiting for his prey in the shape of capsized freshmen and their 'funnies'."

"Now, I'll tell you what it is, you know," says that gorgeous young fellow-commoner, the Honourable Augustus de Slimchick; "it's too bad, you know, for these sea-vultures, you know, to bring their ill-gotten gains up here, and to batten upon the college butteries!"

Oh! those dreary hours when I was supposed to be the cause of wit in Slimchick, and to provoke jokes in the obese mind of Swilsbury! But the dons were just as bad in their way.

"Oh, indeed!" said Sniggles; "dear me, really now, you come from Cornwall!" and Sniggles smiled.

Now, I want to know *why* Sniggles smiled. Cornwall! Why not Cornwall? Isn't Cornwall better than your own sloppy Lincolnshire, O Sniggles?

But there was no reasoning with these people. I wonder how often I have been told that abominable lying story of the Cornish parson, who, on hearing of a wreck when in the middle of his sermon, cried out, "Let us all start fair!" I wonder how often, and in how many varieties of ways, I have had forced upon me that stale, flat, insipid joke about the wise men having come from the *East*. I wonder how often I have had to declare to well-meaning people, that Cornwall is *not* a queer country, that we do *not* speak the language of Wales or Brittany, that we have good roads, and capital inns, that we are only one day's post from London, and that we regularly read the *Times*.

But you will say that surely my trials must now be over, that living as I do now amongst my own kith and kin, and possessing, in my own little way, a certain otium cum dignitate in my old Cornish home, I can feel all the pride of a Cornishman, without any of these attending disadvantages. No such thing. You are probably aware that the weather has not been altogether propitious this summer. You will probably allow that the season has not been altogether favourable for pedestrian tours, or boating excursions,

or pic-nics in exposed places. Good. Now, I was seated in my snug little study at Treslisick, at the beginning of the late watery month of August, and was glancing hopelessly at my new aneroid barometer, which continued pointing obstinately at "much rain," when the saturated postman brought up the following letter:

"**MY DEAR PENDRAGGLES,**—I am coming to see you at last. I have got a spare fortnight, and I am determined this time to satisfy my curiosity, and to spend it in the land of Tre, Pol, and Pen. You remember Swilsbury. I met him the other day at Cambridge, and prevailed on him to accompany me. He is as absurd as ever, and wants to know whether his life insurance policy will stand good for such a journey. 'The question is how to get to you,' Swilsbury says. 'It is comparatively easy to get to the frontiers, but that there we must arm ourselves with a Cornish vocabulary, and plunge boldly amongst the natives.' I give you warning beforehand that we intend to do the place thoroughly. We hope to be always in the open air, and to see everything, but especially the pilchard-fishery and the mines. We shall start from here on the 20th, and hope to reach Treslisick in the course of the month. More than that I can't say, but don't be surprised at our coming down upon you at any moment. You must be accustomed to this sort of thing. Looking forward to the pleasure of soon making the acquaintance of Mrs. Pendraggles and the youngster,

"I remain, your old friend,
"LAWRENCE LITTERMERE.

"**P.S.—**Swilsbury says this must be fine weather for wrecks, and that he hopes to see you come out in your full developed character, which had so little scope for its genius in those little operations below the locks."

Now, I don't hesitate to say that I disliked the tone of that letter. Putting aside, for the moment, Swilsbury's mouldy old jokes, what sort of a time of it could I reasonably hope to have with two fellows who expected, to use their own words, "to be always in the open air, and to see everything, but especially the pilchard fishery and the mines"? I felt convinced there was another time of trial coming, and that my miseries as a Cornishman were not yet past. But however gloomy may have been my expectations, they fell infinitely short of the miserable reality. The visit may be said to have commenced characteristically. The 20th had been passed by some days, and I was beginning to cherish the absurd idea that, perhaps, they had given up the journey in consequence of the continued bad weather, when, suddenly, my two friends made their appearance. What a day that was! The view from Treslisick is at all times of rather a dreary character, but on the day in question there was a more than usual gloominess about the scene. The whole land-

scape seemed to have been brushed over that morning with a strong solution of Indian ink. The bold headlands struck out here and there amongst the mists, in huge fantastic shapes, which would have made poor Turner beside himself with joy. The rain came down in one determined stream, as though Aquarius had commenced a fresh pitcher, having previously drilled larger holes in his cullender. A large pool was gaining ground at the foot of the verandah, and it was evident that we should soon have to consider the question of our main drainage, and, perhaps, to carry out a break-water in front of the dining-room window.

"It's a wet day," said Mrs. Pendraggles.

We had just finished breakfast, so I got up and went to the window, as though to consider that statement. I was conscious that my walk to the window was rather strutting than otherwise. I was beginning to feel that, after all, thanks to our native climate, Littermere and Swilsbury couldn't possibly come in such weather.

"It is a wet day, my dear," I replied, smiling waggishly at the increasing pool before me, as though it were entirely of my own construction—"it is a wet day! I wonder now what Littermere, who seems so resolved upon doing everything, would do on such an occasion as this?"

At this moment there came mingling with the sighing wind across the laurels a hoarse plaintive sound resembling "aggles." I looked at Mrs. P. "Now, do you know what that noise is, my dear?" I asked, calmly. Mrs. P. who is of a superstitious turn, shook her head and turned pale. "Perhaps now, my love," I continued, "you may be disposed to look upon it as the last gurgling moan of the drowning postman, or possibly you may prefer to consider it as a fiendish howl of the spirit of the storm. But that horrible sound is nothing less than the voice of Swilsbury trying to shout out my name, and the better half of that name is at this moment scudding across the hills, in the embrace of the tempest." "Draggles" came the voice again. It was much louder this time, and the owner of it was no doubt rapidly nearing the house. There was evidently nothing to be done but to submit cheerfully to my fate, and to go and open the door with a smiling countenance.

"Pendraggles!—Pendraggles!" The voice sounded now close upon us; I saw there was no time to be lost, so, seizing my hat, I rushed out desperately into the storm.

It was Swilsbury, a trifle stouter, perhaps, and somewhat older-looking no doubt, but the same genuine Swilsbury still. He had just reached the porch when I came out, and was evidently about to give a pull at the bell, which would have sent the nervous cook into fits, and have added another to her long list of kitchen casualties, when my presence interrupted him.

"Hollo! Pendraggles," he shouted out, taking his dripping hand from the bell-pull, and grasping my fist in a kind of spongy vice, which sent out little squirts of rain between his fingers,

"how d'ye do, old fellow?" And he gave himself a shake like a Newfoundland dog, which covered me with spray. "I say," he rattled on, "what the deuce do you mean by having your gate so far away from the house, in a climate like this, and why, in the name of Chubb, do you keep it locked? Here's Long Litter down here in the dog-cart, bawling himself hoarse, and swearing that he will either go at the gate full tilt, or try a leap at the iron paling."

"My dear Swilsbury," I replied, gravely wiping the spray out of my eyes, "go back like a good fellow and tell Littermere that I am coming immediately; the gate is locked at night to keep out the donkeys, but, as you very properly say, why, in the name of Chubb, do I keep it locked when, after all my precaution, you can come in?"

I flattered myself that this was rather a hit at Swilsbury, but the honest fellow never felt it in the least. He turned back again down the drive in the brightest humour possible, walking persistently through the deepest puddles, and evidently believing that the rain was as much a Cornish institution, and therefore a thing to be "done," as the mines or the fisheries.

When I went down, a few minutes afterwards, to liberate Littermere, I found Swilsbury sitting joyfully on the gate, pointing steadily, like a weathercock, in the face of the south-wester, and singing in liquid notes about "a wet sheet and a flowing sea," to a tune pretty much of his own composition.

I don't intend going into any long detailed account of all the miseries I endured during the ten mortal days that Littermere and Swilsbury remained in these parts, but I may say generally that ten days of a more amphibious life were never spent by any inhabitant of terra firma, and that I am still laid up with the rheumatism, which I contracted on that occasion. I had hugged the idea, before they came down, that, after all, I could show them only just as many of the Cornish sights as I pleased, but that pet notion was very quickly dispelled. On the very first day, Littermere produced a book, which at once showed me that I was entirely at their mercy. It was a Cornish guide-book. What adequate punishment can possibly be found for the man who wrote that book! Our excursions commenced on the very next day. Swilsbury, if he could have had his wild will, would have started us for the Land's End just one hour after his arrival; but, for a wonder, on that occasion I had Littermere on my side, and we managed together to hold him in check.

That first day, the only one that I passed in dry clothes, was a day of deep plots and wily stratagems, during which they drew up a sketch of the campaign they had come to open.

"As regards the weather, you know," says Littermere, "I am, of course, quite prepared for that. Of course, I knew perfectly well beforehand that it always rained in these parts, although I wasn't aware that it rained so

hard. But that doesn't matter in the least; I am come to see Cornwall as it is. I don't want any special weather for *me*, you know. On the contrary, I should prefer seeing everything under the same aspect as that in which it is generally known to the inhabitants. Among other things, I expect to see the Land's End, and the Lizard, and Michael's Mount, and Kainance Cove, and the Logan Rock, and Restormel Castle, and the Church of St. Neots, and the China Clay Works, and the pilchard fishery, and the deepest mine in the county. And, moreover, though they don't quite like putting it down in the book, I expect to see you, my dear boy, at your natural work—reaping the fruits of the storm, and heading the wreckers of Treslisick."

O! think of me, as I stood battling with the gale on the heights of the Lizard, and drenched to the skin on the beach at Kainance. Think of me, not as a wrecker, but as nearly wrecked, through the clumsiness of Swilsbury, on that dreary midnight voyage, when they would persist in going across the bay, to be present at the "tucking" of the pilchards. Think of me during the whole of that time, facing the wind and rain by sea and land; plunging through Atlantic waves, driving over barren heaths, and swampy tracks, and all to see things which I had seen a dozen times before in bright and pleasant weather. And last of all, think of me when I found myself one fatal day down three hundred fathom deep in the earth, and reflected that I had to climb that distance again before I could rejoin my wife and children!

In the whole of that highly objectionable list, which Littermere and Swilsbury had drawn up of places to "do," the item which was the most offensive was certainly that of "mines." Perhaps my objections to the pilchard project had been almost equally strong, but still I can look back upon that excursion with comparative complacency. Indeed, there was not wanting one moment in that miserable night, when I might almost be said to be carried away by a kind of vindictive joy—a feeling highly reprehensible, no doubt, but still hugely pleasing at the time—and that was when Swilsbury succumbed to the mutability of things, and paid an unwilling tribute to the shrine of Neptune. I confess that when I saw the convulsions of that stubborn frame, there vibrated within me a chord of savage delight. But in the matter of the mines, I can find no palliative whatever.

I have by nature a well-grounded antipathy to mines of all kinds. The fact is, that we have never, as a family, been well treated by them. The Pendraggles, in their generations, have, like all Cornishmen, made their little ventures in these speculations, and the result has always been the same: namely, to cramp the Pendraggle income, and diminish the Pendraggle property. Now, Swilsbury, who was always making odd acquaintances about the place, had fallen in, the day before, with a mining captain, a Captain Dick, and had settled the matter there and then; so that, when

we got to the mouth of the mine, there was the captain waiting to receive us. He was a sinewy-looking little man, of wiry frame, who seemed to have sweated himself down to attenuation point, by repeated descents into the dark pit before us. I was glad to find, however, when we came up to him, that he was not at all disposed to look upon our proposal as a light and trifling matter.

"Now then, gentlemen," he said, "have you quite made up your minds to go down the mine? Remember, I'm going down to inspect the mine thoroughly, so, if you go, you must consent to be down rather longer, perhaps, than you may find pleasant. It isn't altogether *easy* work, gentlemen, going through our mine; you won't be always able to walk upright, you know," looking hard at the long legs of Littermere; "and it's also very hot down there, and very wet," glancing on to Swilsbury, and then to me. "If, however, you *do* go, you must promise to obey my directions, but I warn you that you've got some work before you, and that you'd better not take it in hand unless you feel confident you will be able to carry it through."

I fancied I saw here a kind of last chance of escape, so I nodded my head gravely, in corroboration of all the difficulties that Captain Dick had stated.

But I might have continued nodding to this very day, for any good which that motion produced in the hardened hearts of Littermere and Swilsbury. Of course they felt quite equal to it—what did Captain Dick take them for? Did he suppose they were made of gingerbread? Certainly they were ready to go, and ready to go at once. And Swilsbury made one step towards the ladders, as though with the intention of showing us the way.

"No, no!" said the little captain, running on ahead and stopping him; "you mustn't start like that. The first thing to do is to put on proper dresses, and then you must allow *me* to go first."

The proper dresses turned out to be regular mining dresses. The captain showed us into a room, where we arrayed ourselves in those hateful garments—everything was changed, even to our boots; and, in this last respect, a nice change it was, for the boots that fell to my share were so large and heavy that when once I had set them in motion they seemed to walk me off in any direction they pleased. To crown all, we were furnished with miners' hats, thick enough to fend off any stray rocks that might come tumbling about our heads, and on the top of each of these was fixed a lighted candle, to enable us to grope our way down in the dark abysses.

"And now," said Captain Dick, surveying us all three with great complacency, "if you will follow me, gentlemen, we will begin the descent."

What a descent that was! down, down, ladder after ladder, into the very bowels of the earth, our candles just sufficing to render the thick darkness visible. Down into a hot, clammy, stifling atmosphere, fit only for the lungs of salamanders.

We had not gone very far before Swilsbury volunteered to entertain the company by whistling "The girl I left behind me."

"You mustn't whistle, gentlemen," cried the voice of the little captain from the depths below.

"Why not?" remonstrated Swilsbury from above.

"The miners don't like the sound, and never allow it down here," replied the captain.

Down, down again, tramp, tramp, shifting from ladder to ladder, and getting every time into hotter and closer air. It seemed, however, as though no air could be close enough to keep Swilsbury quiet. Finding all attempts at conversation fail, he had, wonderful to say, been silent for at least five minutes, when he suddenly startled us with a song.

"Cheer, boys, cheer! Three cheers for merry England!" sang out Swilsbury.

"Gentlemen mustn't sing songs," came up again the imperative voice of Captain Dick.

"Then what may I sing?"

"Well, you may sing a hymn, or a psalm, if you like, sir," replied the captain, "but the miners won't stand anything else being sung down here."

I could hear from a chuckle below me that Littermere was immensely delighted at this last rejoinder. Psalms and hymns not being Swilsbury's forte, we climbed down the remaining ladders in becoming silence. At times the captain would leave the ladders, and go to see some poor wretches at their work, leading us through low tunnels, in which Littermere was continually knocking his head, and smashing his candle, and behaving altogether in a very unminnerly manner. There was no doubt that the captain knew what he was about when he looked at Littermere's legs, for he was getting by far the most done up of the three. As regards Swilsbury, I don't suppose, of course, that anything would ever really do him up, but he went along panting, and puffing, and perspiring, and evidently considering that a true enjoyment of the mine consisted in tumbling himself along as carelessly as possible, and in falling recklessly over every little obstacle. I observed that he was especially lively when we were cramped up in the narrowest and lowest passages, and that when we got into very hot parts of the mine his spirits rose, just like a thermometer under similar circumstances.

My feelings I shall not describe, neither do I intend to describe what I saw in the mine; but indeed if I did my description would not be of much value. All that I saw was some poor miserable half-naked men, here and there, working away as in the haze of a steam-bath, and digging at the rock in every uncomfortable position possible. I was told that this rock was copper ore, but, as far as tame appearances went, it might have been anything you pleased. Swilsbury, I remember, took his candle from his hat, and ostentatiously examined some of it, as

though he were about to make a tender for the whole concern, and Littermere got into an inexplicable difficulty with one of the men, by talking to him about "aluminum," but it was always a dreary business. Captain Dick soon moved on again, and never gave much time either for Swilsbury's investigations or Littermere's remarks.

But there is one thing, at any rate, which I do remember, or rather which I shall never forget, and that was when we got to the bottom of the mine. We were standing at that time up to our waists in hot water—water really hot enough for an ordinary bath. The little captain commenced an apology, and began to lay the blame upon one of the pumping engines, but Swilsbury interrupted him.

"Don't mention it for one moment, my dear sir," he called out, wallowing in the hot flood like a blanched porpoise; "its refreshing; I like it."

"And now, Captain Dick," said Littermere, faintly, "we are really, at last, at the bottom of the mine, eh? We are actually, I think you said, three hundred fathom below the surface?"

"Three hundred fathom," Captain Dick corroborated.

"Three hundred fathom?" said Swilsbury, contemptuously. "It's my belief, Captain Dick, that you don't know *how* deep you are. It's my opinion that, if you go much lower, you will find yourself tampering with the antipodes, and will break into Wheal Kangaroo or some such cousin mine in Australia, and be had up for trespassing. At any rate," said Swilsbury to Littermere and me, "here is a new sensation! Here we are in a great subterranean hot bath, half boiled and half steamed, at no end of a temperature, our lives depending upon farthing rushlights, and upon the proper working of a pumping engine six hundred yards above our head. Here we are in a place where it is death to whistle or to sing, and where we are entirely at the mercy of this Captain Dick, who might run away and leave us. And remember, Feardrapples, that if it hadn't been for me, you might have died a degenerate Cornishman, without once having seen the inside of your county."

Here I stop; but I remember our climbing up out of that abyss, and, inasmuch as during that pleasing operation Littermere fainted, and was revived by strong British brandy sent down in the bucket, I suppose that he remembers it also.

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